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PERSONAL IDEALISM

PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS BY
EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

EDITED BY

HENRY STURT

London
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PREFACE

THIS volume originated in the conversations and discussions of a group of friends drawn together primarily by their membership in the Oxford Philosophical Society. The Society was started in the spring of 1898, and among some of the most regular attendants at its meetings a certain sympathy of view soon declared itself. In the course of two years the trend of opinion had grown so definite as to suggest to me the project of a volume of essays. Among those who seemed likely to contribute I circulated a programme which made it the object of our volume "to represent a tendency in contemporary thinking, to signalise one phase or aspect in the development of Oxford idealism." That tendency was summed up in a phrase which I thought I was originating at the time I wrote the programme, though it seems to have occurred independently to others.[1] It is the phrase we have chosen for our title, "Personal Idealism." For me our volume fulfils the purpose with which it was projected so far as it develops and defends the principle of personality.

Personality, one would have supposed, ought never to have needed special advocacy in this self-assertive country of ours. And yet by some of the leading thinkers of our day it has been neglected; while by others it has been bitterly attacked. What makes its vindication the more urgent is

[1] Prof. Howison uses it to characterise the metaphysical theory of his *Limits of Evolution*, published last year.

that attacks have come from two different sides. One adversary tells each of us: "You are a transitory resultant of physical processes"; and the other: "You are an unreal appearance of the Absolute." Naturalism and Absolutism, antagonistic as they seem to be, combine in assuring us that personality is an illusion.

Naturalism and Absolutism, then, are the adversaries against whom the personal idealist has to strive; but the manner of the strife must be different in each case. Personal Idealism is a development of the mode of thought which has dominated Oxford for the last thirty years; it is not a renunciation of it. And thus it continues in the main the Oxford polemic against Naturalism. To it and to Naturalism there is no ground common, except that both appeal to experience to justify their interpretations of the world. Thus against this adversary the argument must take the form of showing that from naturalistic premises no tolerable interpretation of the cardinal facts of our experience can be made. If it be asked what are those cardinal facts, I should answer: Those which are essential to the conduct of our individual life and the maintenance of the social fabric. They are summarily recognised in the *credo* that we are free moral agents in a sense which cannot apply to what is merely natural. Round this formula of conviction are grouped the questions debated with Naturalism in our volume. They are the reality of human freedom, the limitations of the evolutionary hypothesis, the validity of the moral valuation, and the justification of that working enthusiasm for ideals which Naturalism, fatalistic if it is to be logical, must deride as a generous illusion. If these crucial questions be decided in our favour, the system of Naturalism is condemned.

Accordingly, where Naturalism confronted us, we were not unfrequently obliged to take the aggressive and carry

the war far into the enemy's country. But in the other essays a different line of action has been taken. The Absolutist is a more insidious, perhaps more dangerous adversary, just because we seem to have more in common with him. He professes to agree with us in the fundamental conviction that the universe is ultimately spiritual; against the naturalist it was just this conviction which had to be vindicated. We decided, then, to meet the Absolutist with what may be called a rivalry of construction. Absolutism has been before the world for a century, more or less. It has put forth its account of knowledge, of morals, and of art; and that account, suggestive though it is, has not satisfied the generality of thinking men. If the grounds of dissatisfaction be demanded, I can only give the apparently simple and hackneyed, but still fundamental answer, that Absolutism does not accord with the facts. Thus, instead of entering upon the intricate task of refuting Absolutism, we have felt free to adopt the more congenial plan of offering specimens of constructive work on a principle which does more justice to experience. Our essays are but specimens. They indicate lines of thought which could not be worked out fully in the space allowed. But they are extensive enough, let us hope, to enable the reader to judge whether their general line of interpretation is not more promising than that of Absolutism.

It may be objected that we are wrong in assuming that Absolutism cannot be reconciled with the principle of personality. In reply two points of incompatibility may be specified shortly; further particularity is impossible without a much fuller statement, more especially since Absolutism is not so much a definite system as an aggregate of tendencies without a universally acknowledged expositor. The two points in respect of which Absolutism tends[1] to

[1] I use a guarded phrase, because what follows is not entirely true of exponents of Absolutism so distinguished as Prof. Henry Jones and Prof. Royce.

be most unsatisfactory are, first, its way of criticising human experience, not from the standpoint of human experience, but from the visionary and impracticable standpoint of an absolute experience; and, secondly, its refusal to recognise adequately the volitional side of human nature. Both matters are dealt with in the essay on Error which stands first in the volume. There it is shown that error and truth are not dependent upon the Absolute; in other words that we can know with certainty without knowing the absolute whole of Reality; and that, if we err, it is by human criteria, not by a theory of the Absolute, that we measure the degree of our error. Further, in regard to volition, the same essay shows that error is relative, not to the content of knowledge only, but also to its intent, *i.e.*, the intention of the agent in setting out upon his search for knowledge. The reader may be left to trace for himself the wider operation of these principles.

In conclusion there is one feature in our essays to which I would venture to call attention as constituting what to my mind is the most valuable feature of their method; that is, the frequency of their appeal to experience. The current antithesis between a spiritual philosophy and empiricism is thoroughly mischievous. If personal life be what is best known and closest to us, surely the study of common experience will prove it so. 'Empirical idealism' is still something of a paradox; I should like to see it regarded as a truism.

H. S.

CONTENTS

ESSAY		PAGE
I.	ERROR. By G. F. Stout, M.A., Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy	1
II.	AXIOMS AS POSTULATES. By F. C. S. Schiller, M.A., Fellow and Assistant Tutor of Corpus Christi College	47
III.	THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM IN ITS RELATION TO PSYCHOLOGY. By W. R. Boyce Gibson, M.A., Queen's College, Lecturer in London University	134
IV.	THE LIMITS OF EVOLUTION. By G. E. Underhill, M.A., Fellow and Senior Tutor of Magdalen College	193
V.	ORIGIN AND VALIDITY IN ETHICS. By R. R. Marett, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Exeter College	221
VI.	ART AND PERSONALITY. By Henry Sturt, M.A., Queen's College	288
VII.	THE FUTURE OF ETHICS: EFFORT OR ABSTENTION? By F. W. Bussell, D.D., Fellow, Tutor, and Vice-Principal of Brasenose College	336
VIII.	PERSONALITY, HUMAN AND DIVINE. By Hastings Rashdall, D.Litt., Fellow and Tutor of New College	369

NOTE.—Each writer is responsible solely for his own essay.

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I

ERROR [1]

By G. F. Stout

SYNOPSIS

1. In Error, what is unreal seems to be thought of in the same way as the real is thought of when we truly know it. How is this possible? As an essential preparation for answering this question we must first deal with another. Do other modes of thinking exist besides those which can be properly said to be either true or false? There are two such modes. (1) Indeterminate or problematic thinking. (2) Thinking of mere appearance without affirming it to be real.

2 and 3. To think indeterminately is to think of something as one of a group of alternatives, without deciding which. The indeterminateness lies in not deciding which; and so far as the indeterminateness extends there is neither truth nor error. Whatever is thus indeterminately thought of belongs to the *Intent* of consciousness. The term *Content* should be reserved for what is determinately presented.

In cognitive process, indeterminate thinking takes the form of questioning as a mental attitude essentially analogous to questioning. Interrogative thinking is the way we think of something when we are interested in knowing it, but do not yet know it either truly or falsely. Its distinctive characteristic is that the decision between alternatives is sought for in the independent reality of the total object in which we are interested. This object is regarded as having a determinate constitution of its own, independently of what we may think about it. We are active in cognitive process only in compelling the object to reveal its nature. The activity is experimental; its result is determined for us and not by us.

In the play of fancy, on the contrary, we do not seek to conform our thought to the predetermined constitution of our object. We select alternatives as we please, and to this extent make the object instead of adapting ourselves to its independent nature.

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[1] Throughout this essay I am deeply indebted to the criticisms and suggestions of Professor Cook Wilson. In particular, I have substantially adopted his account of the distinction between abstract terms and adjectives, in place of a less satisfactory view of my own.

4. Besides indeterminate thinking there is yet another mode of thinking which is neither true nor false. It consists in thinking of mere appearance without taking it for real. This happens, for example, in the play of fancy. Mere appearance consists in those features of an object of consciousness which are due merely to the special conditions, psychological and psychophysical, of its presentation, and do not therefore belong to its independent reality.

5 and 6. Error occurs when what is merely apparent, appears to belong to an independent reality in the same way as its other real features. The conditions under which this occurs may be divided under two heads. (1) Confusion. (2) Ignorance and inadvertence. Ignorance or inadvertence are present in every error, Confusion only in some.

7. It follows from the very nature of error that it cannot exist unless the mind is dealing with something independently real. Hence, some truth is presupposed in every error as its necessary condition.

8. There are limits to the possibility of error. There can be no error unless in relation to a corresponding reality, which is an object of thought for him who is deceived. Further, this reality must be capable of being thought of without the qualification which is said to be illusory. Hence, among other results, we may affirm that abstract objects cannot be illusory unless they contain an internal discrepancy. For, they are considered merely for themselves, and not as the adjectives of any other reality in relation to which they can be illusory. So far as the abstract object is merely a selected feature of actual existence, it is not merely not illusory; it is real. It is something concerning which we can think truly or falsely.

9. But the constructive activity of the mind variously transforms and modifies the abstract object, in ways which may have no counterpart in the actual. To this extent, the abstract object may be relatively unreal. None the less, such mental constructions, so far as they belong to scientific method, are experimental in their character and purpose. They serve to elicit the real nature of the object as an actual feature of actual existence. Thus abstract thinking, even when it is constructive, gives rise to judgments concerning what is real. These judgments may at least be free from the error of ignorance. For the mind may require no other data to operate on in answering its questions except those that are already contained in the formulation of them. Errors of confusion and inadvertence may still occur. But even these are avoidable by simplifying the problems raised. Thus, abstract thinking yields a body of certain knowledge.

10. Certainty, then, is attainable. It exists when a question is made to answer itself, so as to render doubt meaningless. When this is so the real is present to consciousness, as the illusory can never be.

I. The General Nature of Error

§ 1. The question raised in the present essay is fundamentally the same as that discussed in Plato's *Theætetus*. The *Theætetus* may be described as a dialogue on Theory of Knowledge. But the central problem did not take the same shape for Plato as it does for most modern epistemologists since the time of Descartes. What the moderns

trouble themselves about is the nature and possibility of knowledge in general. How, they ask, can a particular individual be in such relation to a reality which transcends and includes his own existence as to know it. Can he know it otherwise than through the affections of his own consciousness which it produces? If it can only be known in this way, can it be said to be known at all? Are not his own mental states the only existences which are really cognised? Questions of this sort occupy modern philosophers, and they have given rise to the Critique of Pure Reason, among other results. But I cannot see any evidence that in this form they gave much trouble to Plato. The nature and possibility of knowledge would probably not have constituted a problem for him at all, had it not been for the existence of error. That we can know was for him a matter of course, and it was also a matter of course that we may be ignorant. But he was puzzled by the conception of something intermediate between knowing and not knowing. If an object is present to consciousness, it is *pro tanto* known; if it is not present to consciousness, it is not known. But in so far as it is known there can be no error, because the knowledge merely consists in its presence to consciousness. And again, in so far as it is not known there can be no error, for what is not known is not present to consciousness: it is to consciousness as if it were non-existent, and therefore the conscious subject as such cannot even make a mistake concerning it. Hence we cannot be in error either in respect to what we know or to what we don't know, and there seems to be no third alternative.

This is Plato's problem, and ours is fundamentally akin to it. For with him we must assert that, in knowing, the object known must be somehow thought of, and in this sense present to consciousness. The grand lesson of the history of Philosophy is just that all attempts to explain knowledge on any other assumption tumble to pieces in ruinous incoherence, and that from the nature of the case they must do so. The only form such attempts can take

is to treat knowledge simply as a case of resemblance, conformity, or causality, between something we are conscious of and something we are not conscious of. What we are conscious of we may be said to know immediately. But the something we are not conscious of, how can *that* be known. The only possible pretence of an answer is that the knowing of it is wholly constituted by its somehow resembling, or corresponding to or causing what is actually present to consciousness. But this pretended answer in all its forms is utterly indefensible. The supposed conformity, resemblance, or causality is nothing to us unless we are in some manner aware of it. If I am to think of A as resembling B or as corresponding to it or as causing it, I must think of B as well as of A. Both A and B must be in some way present to my consciousness.

The very distinction of truth and error involves this. Truth is frequently defined as the agreement, and error as the disagreement, of thought with reality. But this definition, taken barely as it stands, is defective and misleading. It omits to state that the reality with which thought is to agree or disagree must itself be thought of, and that the thinker must intend to think of it as it is. Otherwise there can be neither truth nor error. I may imagine a dragon, and it may be a fact that dragons do not actually exist. But if I do not intend to think of something which actually exists, I am not deceived. And, on the same supposition, the actual existence of dragons exactly resembling what I imagine would not make my thought true. It would be a curious coincidence and nothing more. So in general, if we assume a sort of inner circle of presented objects, and an outside circle of unpresented realities, we may suppose that the presented objects are similar or dissimilar to the real existences, or that in some other way they correspond or fail to correspond to them. But the resemblance or correspondence would not be truth and the dissimilarity or non-correspondence would not be error. Even to have a chance of making a mistake we must think of something real and we must intend to think

of it as it really is. The mistake always consists in investing it, contrary to our intention, with features which do not really belong to it. And just here lies the essential problem. For these illusory features seem to be present to cognitive consciousness in the same manner as the real features are.[1] How then is it possible that they should be unreal. This is our problem, and evidently it is closely akin to that raised by Plato. But there is a difference and the difference is important. Our difficulty arises from the fact that when we are in error what is unreal appears to be present to consciousness *in the same manner* as what is real is presented when we truly know. While the erroneous belief is actually being held, the illusory object seems in no way to differ for the conscious subject from a real object. The distinction only arises when the conscious subject has discovered his mistake, and then the error as such has ceased to exist. The essential point is not merely that both the illusory and the real features are presented, but also that they are both presented as real and both believed to be real. It is not enough to say that they are both really appearances. We must add that they are both apparent realities.

Now the question did not take this shape for Plato. The difficulty which he emphasises is not that what is unreal may be present to consciousness *in the same way* as what is real. The stumbling-block for him is rather that it is present to consciousness at all. For what is present to consciousness must, according to him, be known ; and if it is known, how can it be unreal ? On the other hand if it is not present to consciousness, it is simply unknown. Thus there would seem to be no room for that something intermediate between knowing and being ignorant which is called error.

Before proceeding to deal with our own special difficulty it will be well to examine the Platonic assump-

[1] It will be found in the sequel that I admit cases where the conditions which make error possible are absent, and in these cases the real is present to consciousness in a different manner from that in which the unreal is capable of being presented.

tion that whatever is in any way present to consciousness, whatever is in any way thought of, is known—unless indeed error be an exception. Besides knowing and being mistaken it is also possible merely to be aware of a mere appearance which not being taken for reality is therefore not mistaken for reality. This is a point to which we shall recur at a later stage. For the present I wish to draw attention to another mode of thinking which is neither knowing, nor mere appearance, nor error.

II. Intent and Content

§ 2. Cognitive process involves a transition or attempted transition from ignorance to knowledge, and where we are trying to make this transition there may be an intermediate state which is neither knowledge, nor ignorance, nor error. We may be interested in knowing what we do not as yet know. But we cannot be interested in knowing what we do not think of at all. In what way then do we think of anything before we know it or appear to know it? I reply that it is an object of interrogative or quasi-interrogative consciousness. It is thought of as being one and only a *certain* one of a series or group of alternatives, though which it is we leave undecided.

Sometimes the question is quite definite. The alternatives are all separately formulated. Thus we may ask—Is this triangle right-angled, acute, or obtuse? In putting the question we seek for only a certain one of the three alternatives, but until the answer is found we do not know which of them we are in search of; we do not know it although we think of it.

Sometimes the question is only partially definite; only some alternatives or perhaps only one of them is separately formulated. Thus we may ask—Has he gone to London, or where else?

Sometimes again, the question is indefinite. What is sought is merely thought of as belonging to a group or series of alternatives of a certain kind, which are not

separately formulated. Suppose that I am watching the movements of a bird. My mental attitude is essentially of the interrogative type even though I shape no definite question. I am virtually asking,—what will the bird do next? The bird may do this, that, or the other, and I may not formulate the alternatives. But whatever changes in its position or posture may actually occur, are for that very reason what I am interested in knowing before I know them. I am looking for the determinate while it is as yet undetermined for me. Or, to take an illustration of a different kind. I have to find the number which results from multiplying 1947 by 413. At the outset I do not know what the number is, and yet there is a sense in which I may be said to think of it. I think of it determinately as the number which is to be obtained by a certain process. So far I may be said to know about it. But the knowledge about it is not knowledge of what it is. Yet this is what I aim at knowing, and therefore I must in some sense think of it. I think of it indeterminately. I think of it as being a certain one of a series of alternative numbers, which I do not separately formulate.

So far I have considered only cases in which knowledge is sought before it is found, so that the transition from the indeterminate to the determinate comes as the answer to a question definite or indefinite. But there are instances in which this is not so. There are instances in which the answer seems to forestall the question. A picture falls while I am writing. I was not previously thinking of the picture at all, but of something quite different. My attention is only drawn to the picture by its fall. But the picture then becomes distinguished as subject from its fall as predicate. This means that the picture is thought of as it might have existed for consciousness before the fall took place. It is regarded as relatively undetermined and the predicate as a determination of it. The fall of the picture comes before consciousness as if it were the answer to a question.[1]

[1] Of course if we suppose that the noise of the fall first awakens

The relation of subject and predicate is essentially analogous to what it would have been if we had previously been watching to see what would happen to the picture.

In this and similar instances, there is an actual distinction of subject and predicate essentially analogous to that of question and answer. But in a very large part of our cognitive experience no such distinction is actually made. I look, let us say, at my book-shelves, and I am aware of the books as being on the shelves and of the shelves as containing the books. But I do not formulate verbally or otherwise the propositions:—"The books are on the shelves," or "The shelves contain the books." Neither the books nor the shelves are regarded as relatively indeterminate and as receiving fresh determination in the fact that one of them stands in a certain relation to the other. Again, I may meet a friend and begin to talk to him on some political topic, proceeding on the assumption that he agrees with me. I find that he does not, and only then do I wake up to the fact that I have been making an assumption. And it is only at this point that the distinction of subject and predicate emerges. Such latent or unformulated presuppositions are constantly present in our mental life. They are constantly involved in the putting of questions. They are constantly involved in the conception of the subjects to which we attach predicates, and also in the conception of the predicates. The nature, function, and varieties of this kind of cognitive consciousness we cannot here discuss. It is sufficient for our purpose to note that all such cognitions are capable of being translated into the subject-predicate form, without loss or distortion of meaning. Further, this translation is necessary if we are to submit them to logical examination. In particular, we cannot otherwise deal with any question relating to their truth or falsity. The disjunction, *true or false*, does not present itself to

the question—What is falling? before we think of the picture, the fall is subject and the picture predicate. But I do not think that this account of the matter always holds good in such cases.

consciousness until we distinguish subject and predicate. In the absence of this distinction there is only unconscious presupposing or assuming. But when the distinction is made it is essentially analogous to that of question and answer.

So far as our thought is indeterminate there can be neither truth nor error. But it must be remembered that our thought is never purely indeterminate. A question always limits the range of alternatives within which its answer is sought; and the question itself may be infected with error. A man for instance may set out to find the square root of two. In the formulation of the question he leaves it undetermined what special numerical value the root of two has. But he assumes that it has some determinate numerical value. To this extent his question is infected with error, and it can have no real answer unless it is reshaped. If he seems to himself to find an answer, he does but commit a further error. What he thinks he wants to know, is not what he really wants to know. Hence in finding what he really wants to know he must alter the form of his question.

This leads me to make a suggestion in terminology. The term 'content of thought' is perpetually being used with perplexing vagueness. I propose to restrict its application. We cannot, without doing violence to language, say that the indeterminate, as such, is part of the content of thought. For it is precisely what the thought does not contain, but only intends to contain. On the contrary, we can say with perfect propriety that it belongs to the *intent* of the thought. It is what the conscious subject intends when its selective interest singles out this or that object.

From this point of view we can deal advantageously with a number of logical and epistemological problems. For instance it throws light on the proposed division of propositions into analytic and synthetic. Whatever can be regarded as a judgment, whether expressed in words or not, is and must be both analytic and synthetic. It is synthetic as regards content and analytic as regards intent.

While I am watching a bird, whatever movement it may make next belongs to the intent of my thought, even before it occurs. It is what I intend to observe. But the special change of posture or position does not enter into the content of my thought until it actually takes place under my eyes. Hence each step in the process is synthetic as regards content though analytic as regards intent. This holds generally for all predication which is not mere tautology. If the predicate did not belong to the intent of its subject, there would be nothing to connect it with this special subject rather than with any other. If it already formed part of the content there would be no advance and therefore no predication at all.

From the same point of view, we may regard error as being directly or indirectly a discrepancy between the intent and content of cognitive consciousness.

Sometimes the discrepancy lies in a latent assumption. The initial question which determines the intent of thought may itself be infected with error, as in the example of a man setting out to find the square root of two. In such cases it would seem that a man cannot reach truth unless he finds something which he does *not* seek. But the reason is that there is already a discrepancy between intent and content in the very formulation of his initial question. The man is interested in formulating an answerable question, and he fails to do so. Similarly wherever error occurs there is always an express or implied discrepancy between intent and content.

It follows that truth and error are essentially relative to the interest of the subject. To put a question seriously is to *want* to know the answer. A person cannot be right or wrong without reference to some interest or purpose. A man wanders about a town which is quite unfamiliar without any definite aim except to pass the time. Just in so far as he has no definite aim he cannot go astray. He is equally right whether he takes a turn which leads to the market-place or one which leads to the park. If he wants to amuse himself by sight-seeing it may be a

mistake for him to go in this direction rather than in that. But if he does not care for sight-seeing, he cannot commit this error. On the other hand if his business demands that he should reach the market-place by a certain time, it may be a definite blunder for him to take the turn which leads to the park. In this example the interest is primarily practical and the blunder is a practical blunder. But the same principle holds good for all rightness and wrongness even in matters which appear purely theoretical. Our thought can be true or false only in relation to the object which we mean or intend. And we mean or intend that object because we are, from whatever motive, interested in it rather than in other things. If a man says that the sun rises and sets, he may refer only to the behaviour of the visible appearance of the sun, as seen from the earth's surface. In that case you do not convict him of error when you remind him that it is the earth which moves and not the sun. For you are referring to something in which he was not interested when he made the statement. Error is defeat. We mean to do one thing and we actually do another. So far as the error is merely theoretical what we mean to do is to think of a certain thing as it is, and what we actually do is to think of it as it is not.

This implies that the thing we think of has a constitution of its own independent of our thinking—a constitution to which our thinking may or may not conform. A question is only possible on the assumption that it has an answer predetermined by the nature of the object of inquiry. It is this feature which marks off the interrogative consciousness peculiar to cognitive process from the form of indeterminate thinking which is found in the play of fancy. While the play of fancy is proceeding, its object is at any moment only partially determined in consciousness, and each step in advance consists in fixing on one alternative to the exclusion of others. But the intent of imaginative thinking is different from that of cognitive, and consequently the decision between competing alternatives is otherwise made. An examination

of this difference will carry us a step farther in our inquiry.

III. Imaginative and Cognitive Process

§ 3. Imaginary objects as such are creatures of our own making. When we make up a fairy-tale for a child the resulting object of consciousness is merely the work of the mind, and it is not taken by us for anything else. In the development of intent into content, of indeterminate into determinate thinking, the decision among alternatives is made merely as we please, whatever be our motive. It depends purely on subjective selection so far as the process is imaginative.

It is necessary to add this saving clause. For no imaginative process is merely imaginative. Even in the wildest play of fancy, the range of subjective selection is restricted by limiting conditions. Gnomes must not be made to fly, or giants to live in flower-cups. Thackeray's freedom of selection in composing *Vanity Fair* was circumscribed by his purpose of giving a faithful representation of certain phases of human life. In so far as such limiting conditions operate, the mental attitude is not merely imaginative. It is imaginative only in so far as the limiting conditions still leave open a free field for the loose play of subjective selection.

This freedom of subjective selection is absent in cognitive process. Instead of deciding between alternatives according to his own good pleasure, the conscious subject seeks to have a decision imposed upon him independently of his wish or will. It is true that cognitive process may include a varied play of subjective selection. But there is one thing which must not be determined by subjective selection. It is the deciding which among a group of alternative qualifications is to be ascribed to the object we are interested in knowing.

In cognitive process as such we are active merely in order that we may be passive. Our activity is successful

only in so far as its result is determined for us and not by us.

In this sense we may say that the work of the mind when its interest is cognitive has an *experimental* character. What is ordinarily called an experiment is a typical case of this mental attitude. A chemist applies a test to a substance. The application of the test is his own doing. But the result does not depend on him: he must simply await it. Yet he was active only in order to obtain this result. He was active that he might enable himself to be passive. He was active in order to give the object an opportunity of manifesting its own independent nature. His activity essentially consists in the shaping of a question so as to wrest an answer from the object of inquiry. In all cognitive process the mental attitude is essentially analogous. Suppose that I am interested in knowing whether any number of terms in the series $1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{8}$, etc., have for their sum the number 2. I may proceed by actually adding. This is a mental experiment, but it turns out to be unsuccessful. It does not transform my initial question into a shape in which it wrests its own answer from its object. By adding any given number of terms I find that the sum is less than two. But the doubt always remains whether by taking more terms I may not reach a different result. Under this mode of treatment my object refuses to manifest its nature so as to answer my question. I fail to obtain an answer by waiting for data which I have not got—by waiting till some number of terms shall present itself having 2 for their sum. Accordingly I resort to another form of experiment. I appeal to experience *a priori*, instead of experience *a posteriori*. Instead of looking for data which I have not got, I try to obtain an answer by manipulating the data which I already possess in the very conception of the series as such, and of the number 2. I fix attention on the form of serial transition, and I inquire whether this is capable of yielding a term such as will make 2 when it is added to the sum of preceding terms. I find that

such a term must be equal to the term that precedes it, and that according to the law of the series each term is the half of that which precedes it. Hence no number of terms can have 2 as their sum. My experiment is successful. It translates my question into a shape in which it compels an answer from its object.

Suppose again that I am verifying the statement that two straight lines cannot enclose a space. I conceive two lines as straight, ignoring all else but their being lines and their being straight. I then consider the varying changes of relative position of which they are capable, and I find by trial that only certain general kinds of variation are possible. If I think of them as not meeting at all, they refuse to enclose a space. The same is true when they are thought of as meeting at one point only. But if they meet at more than one point they insist on coinciding at all points. This result of my experiment does not depend on my activity; it is determined for me by the nature of the object on which I operate, by the constitution of space and of straight lines.

It will be seen that I have included under the term experiment two very different groups of cases. To the first group belong such instances as the application of a chemical test. Their distinctive character is that an answer to the question raised cannot be obtained merely by operating on the data which are already presupposed in putting the question itself. When I am watching to see what a bird will do next, the decision does not come merely from a consideration of what I already know about the bird. The decision is given by *a posteriori* experience. On the other hand, if I want to know whether two straight lines can enclose a space I need no data except lines, straightness, and space as such. I can shape my question by mentally operating on these data so that it answers itself. The decision is given by *a priori* experience. But both results obtained *a priori* and those obtained *a posteriori* are equally due to an experi-

mental process, to an activity that exists in order that it may be determined by its object.

IV. Mere Appearance and Reality

§ 4. All error consists in taking for real what is mere appearance. In order to solve the problem of error we must therefore discover the meaning of this distinction between mere appearance and reality. We are now in a position to take this step. We have a clue in the foregoing discussion of the nature of the imaginary object as such. The imaginary object as such is unreal and we see quite clearly wherein its unreality consists. It is unreal inasmuch as its imaginary features as such have no being independently of the psychical process by which they come to be presented to the individual consciousness. They are merely the work of the mind, merely the product of subjective selection and they are therefore mere appearances. But though they are mere appearances, they are not therefore illusory or deceptive. They are not deceptive, because they are not taken for real. While the purely imaginative attitude is maintained, they are not taken either for real or unreal. The question does not arise, because in imagination as such we are not interested in the constitution of an object as independent of the process by which we come to apprehend it.[1] On the other hand when the question *is* raised whether what we merely imagine has this independent being, we commit no error if we refuse to affirm that it has. Mere appearance is not error so long as we abstain from confusing it with reality.

The imaginary object is only one case of mere appearance. It is the case in which the nature of what is presented to consciousness is determined merely by the psychical process of subjective selection. But there is always mere appearance when and so far as the nature of

[1] The fact that the object is merely imaginary is not attended to. We do not contrast it as unreal with something else as real. If we are externally reminded of its unreality, the flow of fancy is disturbed. The flow of fancy is also disturbed if we are called on to believe that our fancies are facts. The whole question of reality or unreality is foreign to the imaginative attitude.

a presented object is determined merely by the psychological conditions of its presentation, whatever these may be. There is always mere appearance when and so far as a presented object has features due merely to the special conditions of the flow of individual consciousness as one particular existence among others, connected with a particular organism and affected by varying circumstances of time and place.

In ordinary sense-perception the thing perceived is constantly presented under modifications due to the varying conditions of the perceptual process. But what we are interested in knowing is the thing so far as it has a constitution of its own independent of these conditions. Hence whatever qualifications of the object are recognised as having their source merely in the conditions of its presentation are *pro tanto* contrasted with its reality as being merely its appearances.

An object looked at through a microscope is presented as much larger and as containing far more detail than when seen by the naked eye. But the thing itself remains the same size and contains just the same amount and kind of detail. The difference is due merely to conditions affecting the process of perception, and it is therefore merely apparent. On the other hand, the details which become visible when we use the microscope, and which were previously invisible, are ascribed to the real object. The parts of the object being viewed under uniform perceptual conditions, whatever differences are presented must be due to it, and not to the conditions of its presentation. The visible extension of a surface increases or diminishes according as I approach or recede from it, and the visible configuration of things varies according to the point of view from which I look at them. But these changes being merely due to the varying position of my body and its parts are regarded as mere appearances so far as they are noted at all.[1] If I close my eyes or look

[1] To a large extent they pass unnoted. We have acquired the habit of ignoring them. So far as this is the case, they are not apprehended as appearances of the thing perceived.

away, objects, previously seen, disappear from view. But this being due merely to the closing of my eyes or my turning them in another direction is no real change in the things. They are really just as they would have been if I had continued to look at them.

It is important to notice that in cases of this kind the mere appearance is not to be identified with any actual sense-presentation. The appearance is due to a certain interpretation of the sensible content of perception, suggested by previous experience. When we see a stick partially immersed in a pool, the visual presentation is such as to suggest a bend in the stick itself. Even while we are denying that the stick itself is bent, we are thinking of a bend in it. Otherwise the act of denial would be impossible. This being understood, it is easy to see that all cases of mere appearance are in principle analogous to the examples drawn from sense-perception. Mere appearance exists wherever anything is thought of as having a character which does not belong to it independently of the psychical process by which it is apprehended. Unless this character is affirmed of its independent reality, there is no error. If a man denies that two lines are commensurable, or if he questions whether they are so or not, their commensurableness must have been suggested to his mind. If the lines are really incommensurable, this suggestion is mere appearance. Should he affirm them to be commensurable he is in error.

We now pass to two important points of principle. In the first place it should be clearly understood that mere appearance is a qualification of the object apprehended and not of the mind which apprehends it. There is here a complication due to an ambiguity in the term, *appearance*. It may mean either the presenting of a certain appearance or the appearance presented. The last sense is that in which I have hitherto used the word in speaking of mere appearance. A stick, partly immersed in a pool, appears bent in the sense that it presents the appearance of being bent. The bend is the appearance

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presented. Now the presenting of this appearance is an adjective of the stick as an independent reality. The stick which is really straight really presents the appearance of being bent. It does not merely appear to appear bent: it really appears so. Given the psychological and psychophysical conditions of its presentation, it is part of its independently real nature that it should wear this appearance. But the apparent bend is not a qualification of the independently real stick. It is a qualification of a total object constituted by the real stick so far as it is present to consciousness and also by certain other presented features which are due merely to the special conditions under which the real stick is apprehended. Mere appearance is in no sense an adjective of the cognitive subject. The person to whom a straight staff appears as bent when it is partially dipped in a pool is not himself apparently bent on that account, either bodily or mentally. He who imagines a golden mountain is not himself the appearance of a golden mountain: his psychical processes are not apparently golden or mountainous. The existence of mere appearance is not that of a psychical fact or event except in the special case where the real object thought of happens to be itself of a psychical nature.

In the second place, the distinction between mere appearance and reality is relative to the special object we are interested in. In ordinary sense-perception we are interested in the objects perceived so far as they have a constitution independent of the variable conditions bodily and mental of the perceptual process. Contrast this with the special case of a beginner learning to draw from models. For him what in ordinary sense-perception is mere appearance becomes the reality. He has to reproduce merely what the object looks like from the point of view at which he sees it. And he finds this a hard task. The visual presentation is apt to be apprehended by him as having qualifications which do not belong to its own independent constitution, but are merely due to the conditions of his own psychical processes in relation to it. His established habit of attending only to physical

magnitude and configuration leads him to think of physical fact even in attempting to think only of the sensory presentation. Thus a child in drawing the profile of a face will put in two eyes. But the physical fact so far as it is unseen does not belong to the reality of the visual presentation. It is therefore mere appearance relatively to *this* reality, and in so far as it is confused with this reality, it is not only mere appearance but error.

V. Special Conditions of Error

§ 5. Having defined what we mean by mere appearance we have now only one more step to take in order to account for error. We have to show how the mere appearance of anything comes to be confused with its reality.

It is clear from the previous discussion that there can be neither truth nor falsehood except in so far as the mind is dealing with an object which has a constitution predetermined independently of the psychical process by which it is cognised.

Such logical puzzles as the *Litigiosus* and *Crocodilus* involve an attempt to affirm or deny something which is not really predetermined independently of the affirmation or denial of it. In the *Litigiosus* the judgment to be formed is supposed to be part of the reality to which thought must adjust itself in forming it. Euathlus was a pupil of Protagoras in Rhetoric. He paid half the fee demanded by his teacher before receiving lessons and agreed to pay the remainder after his first lawsuit if he won it. His first lawsuit was one in which Protagoras sued him for the money. The jury found themselves in what appeared a hopeless perplexity. It seemed as if they could not affirm either side to be in the right without putting that side in the wrong. The difficulty arose from the attempt to conform their decision to a determination of the real which had no existence independently of the decision itself. Apart from the judgment which they were endeavouring to form, the reality was indeterminate and it could not therefore determine their thought in the

process of judging. The *Crocodilus* illustrates the same principle in a different way. A crocodile had seized a child, but promised the mother that if she told him truly whether or not he was going to give it back, he would restore it. There would be no difficulty here if the mother's guess were supposed to refer to an intention which the crocodile had already formed. But he is assumed to hold himself free to regulate his conduct according to what she may happen to say, and so to falsify her statement at will. There is therefore no predetermined reality to which her thought can conform or fail to conform; which alternative is real, is not predetermined independently of her own affirmation of one of them. Hence an essential condition of either true or false judgment is wanting. One consequence of the general principle is that a proposition cannot contain any statement concerning its own truth or falsity. Before the proposition is made in one sense or another its own truth or falsity is not a predetermined fact to which thought can adjust itself. Thus if a man says, "The statement I am now making is false," he is not making a statement at all. On the other hand, he would be speaking significantly and truly if he said "The statement I am now making contains nine words." For he can count each word after determining to use it. His precedent determination to use the word is an independent fact which he does not make in the act of affirming it.

For error to exist the mind must work in such a way as to defeat its own purpose. Its interest must lie in conforming its thought to the predetermined constitution of some real object. It must be endeavouring to think of this as it is independently of the psychological conditions of the thinking process itself. And yet, in the very attempt to do so, it must qualify its object by features which are merely due to such psychological conditions.

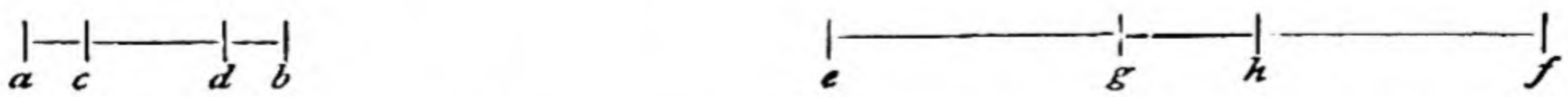
I cannot pretend to give anything approaching a full analysis of the various special circumstances which give rise to this confusion of appearance and reality. But

the following indication will serve to illustrate the general principle involved.

Errors may be roughly classified under two heads which we may designate (1) as errors of confusion, and (2) as errors of ignorance, inadvertence, and forgetfulness. All errors involve a confusion of appearance and reality. But this confusion is the error itself, not a condition determining its occurrence. When we speak of an error of confusion, we mean an error which not only is a confusion, but has its source in a confusion. Again, all errors involve some ignorance, inadvertence, or forgetfulness. Whenever any one makes a mistake, there is something unknown or unheeded which would have saved him from error if he had known and taken account of it. But we can distinguish between cases in which ignorance or inadvertence or forgetfulness are the sole or the main source of the erroneousness of a belief, and those in which another and a positive condition plays a prominent part. This other positive condition is what I call confusion. I shall begin by explaining wherein it consists, and illustrate it by typical examples.

(1) Errors of Confusion

§ 6. There is a confusion wherever our cognitive judgment is determined by something else than the precise object which we are interested in knowing. We mean to wrest a decision from just this object concerning which the question is raised; but owing to psychological conditions, other factors intervene without our noticing their operation and determine, or contribute to determine, our thought. Optical illusions supply many examples. I must content myself with one very simple illustration of this kind.



In the above figure there are two straight lines, *a b* and *e f*; the part *c d* is marked off on *a b*, and the

part *g h* on *e f*. *c d* is really equal to *g h*. But most persons on a cursory glance would judge it to be longer. The reason is that though we mean to compare only the absolute length of *c d* with the absolute length of *g h*, yet without our knowing it, other factors help to determine the result. These are the relative length of *c d* as compared with *a b*, and the relative length of *g h* as compared with *e f*. This example is typical. In all such instances we mean our judgment to depend on comparison of two magnitudes as presented to the eye. But these magnitudes are presented in more or less intimate union with other items so as to form with these a group which the attention naturally apprehends as a whole. Hence there is a difficulty in mentally isolating the magnitudes themselves from the contexts in which they occur so as to compare these magnitudes only. We seek to be determined by the nature of the object which we are interested in knowing, but we escape our own notice in being determined by something else. This is confusion.

Another most prolific source of confusion is found in pre-formed association. All associations are in themselves facts of the individual mind and not attributes of anything else. If the idea of smoke always calls up in my mind the idea of fire as its source, this is something which is true of me, and not of the fire or the smoke as independent realities. It might seem from this that whenever our judgment of truth and falsehood is determined by association, we commit a confusion. But this is not so; for it is the function of association to record the results of past experience; and when the results recorded are strictly relevant to the object we are interested in knowing, and to the special question at issue, there is no confusion.

The association between 12 × 12 and equality to 144 registers the result of previous multiplication of 12 by 12. There is therefore no confusion in allowing it to determine our cognitive judgment. But the associative mechanism may become deranged so that 12 × 12 calls

up 154 instead of 144. In that case to rely on it as a record involves an error of confusion.

It often happens that certain connections of ideas are insistently and persistently obtruded on consciousness owing to associations which have not been formed through experiences relevant to the question at issue. So long and so far as their irrelevance is unknown or unheeded, the irrelevant association determines the course of our thought in the same way as the relevant. Take by way of illustration an argument recently used by an earth-flattener. The earth must be flat; otherwise the water in the Suez Canal would flow out at both ends. The associations operative in this case, are those due to experience of spherical bodies situated on the earth's surface. Whenever the earth-flattener thinks of the earth as a globe, inveterate custom drives him to think of it as he has been used to think of all the other globes, of which he has had experience. But the question at issue relates to the earth as distinguished from bodies on its surface. Hence a fallacy of confusion.

One effect of repeated advertisements such as those of Beecham's pills, covering several columns of a newspaper, is to produce this kind of illusion. Self-praise is no recommendation. But self-praise skilfully and obtrusively reiterated may suffice to produce an association of ideas which influences belief.[1]

Errors due to ambiguity of words come under this head. A word is associated with diverse though allied meanings, and, as we go on using it in what aims at being continuous thought, one meaning insensibly substitutes itself for another. Being unaware of the shifting of our object from A to A′ we go on assuming that what we have found to be true of A is true of A′. We begin for instance by talking of opponents of government, meaning

[1] Many persons have a prejudice against advertisements. I share this prejudice myself. And yet the obtrusive vividness and persistent reiteration of some of them does now and then produce in me a momentary tendency to believe which might easily become an actual belief if I were not on my guard. Alliterative and rhetorical contrast often help to stamp in the association. "Pink pills for pale people" is a good instance. Of course the whole effect of advertisement cannot be explained in this way.

advocates of anarchy, and we proceed to apply what we have said of these to opponents of some existing government.

"Bias" is a source of confusion distinct from irrelevant association, though the two frequently co-operate to produce error. Bias exists so far as there is a tendency to accept one answer to a question rather than another because this answer obtrudes itself on consciousness through its connection with the emotions, sentiments, desires, etc. of the subject or in one word, because it is specially *interesting*. The interest is most frequently agreeable. But it may also be disagreeable. In returning home after the discovery of the famous footprint, Robinson Crusoe's terror caused him to mistake every bush and tree, and to fancy every stump at a distance to be a man. To say that a man's mind is intensely occupied in escaping or guarding against danger, is equivalent to saying that he is intensely interested in finding out what the danger is and where it lies. Hence he will be on the alert for signs and indications of peril. He will therefore attend to features of his environment which would otherwise have passed unnoted, and he will neglect others which he would otherwise have attended to. Thus fear may influence belief by determining what data are, or are not, taken into account. By excluding relevant data it may give rise to error of inadvertence. But besides this the data which fear selects are also emphasised by it. They obtrude themselves with an insistent vivacity proportioned to the intensity of the emotion. This insistent vivacity directly contributes to determine belief and becomes a source of error of confusion. In view of current statements this last point needs to be argued.

The prevailing view appears to be that errors due to bias are merely errors of inadvertence. Dr. Ward, for example, strongly takes up this position. "Emotion and desire," he remarks, "are frequent indirect causes of subjective certainty, in so far as they determine the constituents of consciousness at the moment—pack the

jury or suborn the witnesses as it were. But the *ground* of certainty is in all cases some quality or some relation of these presentations *inter se*. In a sense, therefore, the ground of all certainty is objective—in the sense, that is, of being something at least directly and immediately determined for the subject and not by him."[1]

What Ward's argument really proves is that subjective bias cannot be recognised by the subject himself as a ground or reason for believing. It does not follow that it may not directly influence belief through confusion. In cases of confusion we seek control proceeding from the nature of our object, and we find our thought determined by something else which we fail to distinguish from the objective control we are in search of. Now there seems to be no reason why subjective interest should not, in this way, mask itself as objective control. Connection with emotion and desire may give to certain ideas a persistent obtrusiveness which is not always adequately traced to its source. But this persistent obtrusiveness, when and so far as it is not traced to its source in emotion and desire, must appear as if it arose from the nature of the object. It will thus appear to the subject as something which determines him and is not determined by him. This confusion may assume three forms. In the first place there are instances in which it is very difficult to discover any other cause of belief except subjective bias. The person who holds the belief cannot assign any reason for it except that he feels it to be true. Sometimes, no doubt, there may be in such cases an objective ground which the believer finds it impossible to express or indicate to others. But there are instances in which the sole or the main factor seems to be subjective bias. What is believed obtrudes itself upon consciousness vividly and persistently because of its peculiar kind and degree of interest so that it is difficult to frame the idea of alternative possibilities save in a comparatively faint, imperfect, and intermittent way.

The second class of cases is less problematical. I refer

[1] Article on "Psychology," in *Ency. Brit.* p. 83.

to instances in which there are relevant reasons for belief but reasons which are inadequate to account for the actual degree of assurance, apart from the co-operation of bias. A regards B with hatred and jealousy so that the mere imagination of B's disgrace or ruin has a fascination for him. Something occurs which would produce in an impartial person a suspicion that B had been behaving in a disgraceful way. A at once believes the worst with unwavering decision and tenacity. It may be that the impartial person, who only entertains a suspicion, has just as restricted a view of the evidence as A. The restriction may be due to ignorance or indifference in his case, and mental preoccupation in A's. But for both the relevant evidence may be virtually the same. The difference is that in A's mind it is reinforced and sustained by subjective bias which he does not sufficiently allow for. In a third class of instances irrelevant association co-operates with subjective bias. This is perhaps the most fertile source of superstitions and of those savage beliefs of which superstitions are survivals. Take for example the tendency which some uneducated persons and even some who are educated find irresistible, to think of their bodies as still sentient after death. *Sit tibi terra levis* is more than a metaphor. It points back to the belief that the weight of the superincumbent earth actually distresses the corpse. It is a Mahometan superstition that the believing dead suffer when the unhallowed foot of a Christian treads on their graves. In the old Norse legends to lay hands on the treasure hidden in the tomb of a chief is to run a serious risk of rousing its owner from his long sleep to defend his possessions. Perhaps there are few people who look forward to their own funeral without figuring themselves to be present at it not only in body but in mind. This whole point of view is in part due to a firmly established association arising from the intimate connection of mind and body during life. But besides this we must also take into account the gruesome fascination of such ideas. Their vivid and absorbing interest makes it difficult to get rid of them, and this

persistent obtrusiveness in so far as it is not traced to its source in psychological conditions contributes to determine belief in their reality.

(2) Errors of Ignorance and Inadvertence

We turn now from the error of confusion to the error of mere ignorance, which must be taken to include all forgetfulness or inadvertence. As I have before pointed out, all error involves some ignorance or inadvertence; but in the case of confusion there is also some other positive ground of the erroneousness of the belief. An irrelevant condition operates as if it were relevant. It would not do so, if we were fully and persistently aware of its presence and influence, and to this extent the error of confusion is one of ignorance or inadvertence; but the ignorance and inadvertence is not the sole cause of error. There is also the undetected influence of the irrelevant factor determining the course of thought. In the error of mere ignorance or inadvertence, on the other hand, the sole ground of the erroneousness of the belief lies in the insufficiency of the data, at the time when it is formed. But here we must guard against a misapprehension. The error is not identical with the ignorance or inadvertence. It is a belief having a positive content of its own. Nor is it correct to say even that the determining cause of this belief lies in the ignorance or inadvertence. Mere negation or privation cannot be the sole ground of any positive result. What directly determines belief is the data which are presented, not anything which is un-presented, and we must add to these as another positive condition the urgency of the interest which demands a decision and will not permit of a suspense of judgment. It is these factors which are operative in producing the belief. Ignorance and inadvertence account only for its erroneousness. In all cognitive process we seek to be determined by the nature of our object. But if the object is only partially known, what is unknown may be relevant so that if it had been known

and heeded another decision would have been imposed on us.

As an example of error due to mere ignorance, I may refer to a personal experience of my own. Some time ago I set out to visit a friend who, as I assumed, was living in Furnival's Inn. I found on arrival that the whole building had been pulled down. My error in this case was not due to any confusion. The evidence on which I was relying was all relevant and such as I still continue to trust on similar occasions. I went wrong simply because certain events had been occurring since my previous visit to Furnival's Inn without my knowing of them.

Inadvertence is not sharply divided from mere ignorance. It includes all failure to bring to consciousness knowledge, already acquired and capable of recall, at the time when it is required for determining our decision. It may also be taken to include other failures to take into account knowledge which would have been immediately and easily accessible if we had turned our attention in the right direction. Mill gives many examples under the head "Fallacies of Non-observation." From him I quote the following:—"John Wesley, while he commemorates the triumph of sulphur and supplication over his bodily infirmities, forgets to appreciate the resuscitating influence of four months' repose from his apostolic labours." Wesley knew that he had taken rest and also that rest has commonly a recuperative effect in such cases. His failure lay in omitting to take these facts into account owing to subjective bias, as an amateur physician with crochets and as a religious enthusiast.

So far as error is traceable to ignorance or inadvertence, it is perhaps abstractedly possible to conceive that it might have been avoided by an absolute suspense of judgment. I might have refused to count on the continued existence of Furnival's Inn, or even on the chance of it, on the ground that I did not know all that had happened in relation to it, since I saw it last. But such suspense of judgment cannot be uncompromisingly main-

tained as a general attitude throughout our whole mental life. It would be equivalent to a refusal to live at all. Any one who carried out the principle consistently would not say "this is a chair" when he saw one. He would rather say, "This is what, if my memory serves me right, I am accustomed to regard as the visual appearance of a chair." In thus cutting off the chance of error we should at the same time cut off the chance of truth. In order to advance either in theory or practice, we must presume—*bet* on our partial knowledge. We must take the risk due to an unexplored remainder of conditions which may be relevant to the issue we have to decide on. But there is another alternative. A mental attitude is possible intermediate between absolute suspense of judgment and undoubting acceptance of a proposition as true. We may judge that the balance of evidence is in favour of the proposition. Instead of unreservedly expecting to find Furnival's Inn, I might have said to myself that it was a hundred to one I should find it. So far as this proposition has a practical significance as a guide to action it can only mean that I should be right in relying on similar evidence in 99 cases out of 100. But such an attitude does not really evade the possibility of error arising from ignorance and inadvertence. For (1) we are liable to go wrong even in the estimate of probabilities. There are, for example, vulgar errors of this kind which mathematical theory corrects. (2) In determining the probability of this or that proposition, we proceed on the basis of a preformed body of beliefs which are themselves liable to be erroneous. In particular, we are apt to assume undoubtingly that our view of competing alternative is virtually exhaustive, when it is really not so. But we cannot be always sifting these latent presuppositions to the bottom. If we constantly endeavoured to do so in a thorough-going way, it would be impossible to meet the emergencies of practical life or even to make effective progress in knowledge. It is a psychological impossibility to assume and maintain a dubitative attitude at every point where ignorance or inadvertence are capable of

leading us astray. We have not time for this, and in any case the complexity and difficulty of the task would baffle our most strenuous efforts. (3) Continued attention to the possibility of a judgment being wrong would for the most part hamper us in the use of it. In believing, we commit ourselves to act on our belief, to adapt our conduct and our thought to what is believed as being real. In so doing we must more and more tend to drop demurrers and reservations. I cannot every time I return to my house after absence keep steadily before my mind that it may have been burnt down without my knowing it. When we have committed ourselves to a belief so as to conform our thought and conduct to it, it becomes more and more interwoven with the whole system of our mental life. Our interest in its consequences and implications diverts attention from considerations which point to its possible or probable erroneousness and at the same time this same interest forms a subjective bias of growing strength which is likely to lead to an error of confusion.

Absolute suspense of judgment, as we have defined it, would exclude even a judgment of relative probability. There is, however, a different meaning which attaches in ordinary language to the phrase "absolute" or "complete" suspense of judgment. It is frequently taken to mean that the balance of probability for and against a proposition is regarded as even. This kind of suspense does not prevent us from acting as if the proposition were true or false. But neither does it exclude error. For the judgment that probabilities are equally balanced is itself liable to error, like other judgments of probability. Besides this, such a judgment is not by itself sufficient to determine action. It must be supplemented by other beliefs of a more positive kind, and in regard to these the possibility of error again emerges. A man may regard it as an even chance whether a certain operation will kill or cure him. He may, none the less, decide to undergo it, so that his practical decision is the same as if he had no doubt of a favourable result. But the practical decision

is founded on another belief, the belief that the advantage of a favourable issue is greater than the disadvantage of an unfavourable issue. Again a general may think the chances even, of the enemy coming this way or that to attack him. Merely on this basis he could not intelligently make provision for one contingency in preference to the other. In order that he may do so, he must be influenced by other beliefs of a more determinate kind. He may, for instance, believe that if the enemy comes one way, it is useless to attempt resistance, and that if he comes the other, the attack can be repelled. On these assumptions he will proceed as if he undoubtingly accepted the second alternative. Our result, then is—(1) That absolute suspense of judgment excluding even the judgment of probability is equivalent to suspense of action. (2) That the relative suspense of judgment which consists in affirming even chances, does not suffice to determine action unless it is supplemented by other beliefs in which one alternative is preferred to others. Hence it appears that practical decision involves theoretical decision, and that we must constantly risk error by presuming on partial knowledge if we are to live at all.

Here we must close this sketch of the special conditions of error. The topic in itself is almost inexhaustible. But what has been said may serve to illustrate our general position.

This position is simply that error is a special case of mere appearance. It is mere appearance which also appears to be real. The essence of all mere appearance is that it is a feature of an object which belongs to it only in virtue of the psychical conditions under which it is apprehended. In the case of error the psychical conditions so operate that mere appearance is not recognised as such, but is on the contrary presented as if it were real.

VI. No Error is Pure Error

§ 7. The rest of this essay will be occupied with some corollaries which flow from our general position.

One of these is that no error is pure error. However much we may be deceived, the total object of our thinking or perceiving consciousness cannot be entirely illusory.

This does not mean that error is only truth in the making, or that truth can always be obtained by some adjustment, compromise, combination, or higher synthesis of diverging views. When I say that error is never pure error I am not adopting the attitude of the landlord of 'The Rainbow' in *Silas Marner*. "Come, come," said the landlord, "a joke's a joke. We must give and take. You're both right and you're both wrong as I say. I agree with Mr. Macey here, as there's two opinions; and if mine was asked I should say they're both right. Tookey's right and Winthrop's right, and they've only got to split the difference and make themselves even." It is no such comfortable philosophy that I am advocating. On the contrary, I admit and maintain that in the ordinary acceptation of the word a man may be and frequently *is* "completely wrong," and also that he may be and sometimes, though not so frequently, is completely right. But I would point out that such phrases are used in ordinary parlance with a certain tacit and unconscious reservation. "Completely wrong" means completely wrong so far as relates to the point at issue—to the question which alone possesses interest for the parties concerned. If a man meets me some morning and tells me, in good faith, that Balliol College has been burned down during the night, I say, with justice, that he has been completely deceived, when it turns out that there has been no fire, and that Balliol College is just as it was. If my informant were to defend himself from the charge of complete error by alleging that after all Balliol College really exists, and that fires really take place, I should call his answer irrelevant and stupid. Yet the answer would be true enough, and it would only be stupid because of its irrelevance. It would be irrelevant because the existence of Balliol and the occurence of fires were facts taken for granted as a matter of course. There was never any question concerning them. When I said that he was

entirely deceived, I meant that he was so deceived on the only point of interest which could lead him to make the statement at all, or me to listen to it.

Thus in ordinary intercourse we may be completely right in saying that a man is completely wrong. But this is possible only because the statement is made with a tacit and unconscious reservation. It is made with reference not to the total object present to the mind of the person who is deceived, but with reference to that part of it which alone interests us at the moment. But when we are concerned with the philosophical theory of error, what is uninteresting in ordinary intercourse becomes of primary importance. We must consider the total object, and when we do so, we are compelled to recognise that some truth is implied in every error. For otherwise the word "error" loses all meaning.

The unreality of what is unreal lies wholly in its contrast with what is real. It must be thought of as qualifying some real being. Its unreality is relative not to any real being whatever taken at random, but only to that real being to which it is referred as a character or attribute.

It is essential to the possibility of error that both the real being and its unreal qualification must be present to consciousness. I may imagine an animal and describe it as imagined. Another person who is acquainted with some actual animal more or less resembling what I have imagined may regard my description as referring to this. From his point of view he may show that parts of my description are unreal. But he does not convict me of error unless he can show that I intended to describe the animal which he has in mind.

It does not follow that the explicit subject of an erroneous judgment must itself be real and not illusory. It may be illusory in relation to a more comprehensive subject, which is real. If I am told that Cleopolis, the capital of fairy-land, was burnt down last night, I reply that Cleopolis and fairy-land never had any actual existence. Here I condemn both subject and predicate

as illusory. But in doing so I regard the subject as itself a predicate of a more comprehensive subject which really exists. I presuppose a certain kind of reality which I call actual existence. This consists in a system of things and events continuously connected in an assignable way with my own existence at the present moment, and including what happened last night. When I say that Cleopolis never actually existed, I deny that it ever formed a partial feature of this reality.

What has been said of the subject of an erroneous judgment applies also to the predicate. The predicate cannot be entirely unreal. This follows from the fact that the distinction between subject and predicate is relative to the point of view of the person judging, and fluctuates accordingly. Whether I say "this horse is black" or "this black thing is a horse" depends on the point of departure of my thought and not on the nature of its object. If I begin by regarding the object as a horse and then proceed to qualify it as black, "black" is predicate and horse subject. If I begin thinking of the object as a black thing and then proceed to qualify it as being a horse, horse is predicate and "black thing" is subject.

Considerations of this kind have led some writers to regard error as ultimately consisting merely in a misplacement of predicates. Subject is real and predicate is real; we err only in putting them together in the wrong way. This manner of speaking seems to me misleading so far as it suggests that the illusory object, as such, having no positive content of its own, can be resolved without remainder into constituents which are not illusory but real. The fallacy lies in the tacit assumption that *A* as predicate of *B* is just the same *A* as when it is predicated of *C*, *D*, *E*, etc. This is not so. In predicating *A* of *B* we think of *A* as related in a specific way to the other constituents and attributes of *A*. But this relatedness of *B* is as much part of the positive content of our thought as whatever may be left of *B* when we abstract from this relatedness. Besides this, *B* when it is thought of as

existing in these relations is thought of as adjusted to them and modified accordingly. In Goldsmith's poem of the mad dog, the people make a mistake in saying that the man would die.

> The man recovered of the bite;
> The dog it was that died.

Here it is assumed that the man is real, the dog is real and the death is real. It would seem therefore that the error lay merely in a wrong arrangement—in coupling death with the man instead of with the dog. But in fact the death of a man is something different in its nature and implications from the death of a dog, and a man dying is something different from a dog dying. Perhaps if the man had died, the world would have lost a churchwarden. But this could not be part of the meaning of the death of the dog.

VII. Limits to the Possibility of Error

§ 8. If the essential conditions of error are absent, what is taken for real must be real. From this point of view we can prescribe limits to the possibility of error. A belief cannot be erroneous unless it ascribes to a real existence, as such, some qualification which does not belong to it. The real existence must itself be present to consciousness, and the subject must mean it to be qualified by the features which are said to be illusory. Thus, when an illusion is spoken of, we have a right to inquire what the reality is in relation to which it is an illusion. We have a right to insist that this reality must be thought of by the subject who is deceived. We have also a right to insist that it must be capable of being conceived without the feature or features which are said to be illusory. Otherwise there would be a circle.

Now there are cases in which no such reality is assignable, and it is consequently meaningless to speak of error. I believe in the totality of being, and it is

nonsense to say that I may be deceived. For there is no more comprehensive reality of which the totality of being can be conceived as a partial feature or aspect. Whatever point there may be in the ontological argument for the existence of God lies in this. Again, I believe that my consciousness exists, and my belief cannot be illusory. For it cannot be illusory unless I regard my consciousness as a qualification of some reality which is not so qualified. Now whatever this reality is supposed to be, it must be a reality which is present to my consciousness when I commit the error. In other words, we cannot think of any reality to contrast with illusion which does not include the very feature that is alleged to be illusory.

A more interesting illustration is supplied by the objects of abstract thought.

The object signified by an abstract term is not regarded as an adjective of anything else. In substituting for an adjective the corresponding abstract noun we leave out of count adjectival reference and treat the object of our thought only as a substantive. This does not mean that we cease to regard it as an attribute ; for all abstract objects are essentially attributes and must be recognised as such. "Adjectival reference" does not merely consist in being aware that an attribute is an attribute. The distinctive function of adjectives is the attribution of an attribute to a thing. Their specific office is to express the connection of a certain attribute with whatever other attributes the thing may possess. Unless the thing is expressly considered as possessing other attributes, the adjectival reference loses all significance. On the contrary, an attribute abstractly considered is considered by itself: the fact that the things which it qualifies possess other attributes is regarded as irrelevant to the purpose of our thought. Things are referred to only in so far as they may possess the attribute in which we are interested, to the neglect of their other features.

The addition of such phrases as *qua*, or "as such,"

to an adjective always annuls the adjectival reference and substitutes for it the abstract point of view. When I say "white things," I include in the intent of my thought whatever other attributes may belong to the things besides whiteness. Hence in passing from intent to content, I can affirm that "white things are tangible." When I say "white things as such, or *qua* white," I exclude from the intent of my thought the other attributes of white things, though I do not of course deny their existence. Hence I cannot say that "white things as such, or *qua* white, are tangible." In like manner, we cannot say that "whiteness is tangible." For, "whiteness" is equivalent to white things *as such*, or *qua* white.

If this account of the abstract object is correct, such an object cannot be illusory unless it is internally incoherent. For illusion exists only if a qualification is ascribed to something to which it does not belong. But an attribute abstractly considered is regarded merely as an attribute of whatever may happen to possess it. Whiteness is regarded only as an attribute of whatever things are white. But white things *must* be white. There is only one conceivable way in which the abstract object can be unreal. It may be unreal because by its own intrinsic nature it is incapable of existing. But this can be the case only when it is internally incoherent. When it is internally incoherent, it is illusory, because it contains illusion within itself, apart from reference to anything else.[1]

The concept of a solid figure bounded by twelve squares is unreal in this manner. For the nature of solid figures, abstractedly considered, is such as to exclude the qualification attributed to it. Similarly any abstract object is illusory if one of its constituents is thought to be a possible or necessary qualification of another which it

[1] Just as adjectival reference may be annulled by the phrases "as such," or *qua*, so abstraction may be annulled by making the abstract object a subject of a judgment in which it is affirmed to be an attribute of something. For its connection with other attributes of the thing essentially belongs to the import of such a judgment. The judgment is possible because the fact of the abstract object being an attribute is one of its own essential adjectives. When we say that it is an "attribute of," we merely give this adjective a specific determination.

does not so qualify. I speak only of possible or necessary, not of *actual* connection, because the question of actuality involves an adjectival reference beyond the content of the abstract object itself. When we say that a solid figure is not actually bounded by twelve squares, we mean that nothing actually exists, combining the attributes of a solid figure and of being bounded by twelve squares. But this in itself would not make the abstract object illusory: for in its abstractedness it is not intended as the adjective of anything else.

Assuming internal coherence it seems clear that the abstract object cannot be illusory. But is it real? and if so in what sense? I answer that it is real if it is possible to make a mistake or even to conceive a mistake concerning it. It is real, if it is an object with which our thought may agree or disagree. This seems to me the only relevant use of the term reality in theory of Knowledge, and more especially in theory of Error.

It may be urged that the truth or error which has an abstraction for its object is only hypothetical or conditional, resting in an assumption. Now, it is becoming a custom with some writers to use such words as "hypothetical" or "conditional" with perplexing vagueness. In the present case the meaning seems very obscure. Certainly truth and falsehood relating to an abstraction presuppose that it is just this abstract object which we intend and nothing else. But how can this make the truth or error itself hypothetical or conditional? I affirm that the sky is blue and some one tells me that my statement is hypothetical because it can only be true or false on the condition that I really mean the sky and not, let us say, a piece of coal, or the Christian religion. This is so plainly nonsense that it seems futile to waste words over it.[1]

But is not abstract thought unreal, because it takes something to be self-subsistent which is not so? I answer that abstract thought does nothing of the kind. It neither affirms nor denies the adjectival relations of the abstract object, but simply attempts to ignore them and

[1] This point is further considered below. Cf. p. 45.

to deal with whatever is then left to think about. In some cases, there may, perhaps, be nothing left and the experiment fails altogether. In others, there may be very little left and the experiment, though successful, is unfruitful. In yet others, the result may be the opening out of a wide and rich field for thought, and then the experiment is both successful and fruitful.

If we ask why in some cases the experiment proves fruitful in consequences and in others not so, the answer must be looked for in the intrinsic nature of the subject-matter. The essential requisite is a relational system such that given certain relations others are necessarily determined without reference to further data. Some important developments in this direction depend on serial order. The subject-matter exhibits what Herbart used to call a *Reihen-form* or complex of *Reihen-formen.* In ultimate analysis there is serial order wherever the relation of betweenness or intermediacy (Herbart's *Zwischen*) is found. A number lies *between* numbers in a numerical series, a position in space between other positions, a part or a moment of time *between* other parts or moments of time, a musical note of a certain pitch between other notes higher and lower than it. The more complex and systematic is this serial connection including serial interconnection and correspondence of series, the more wide and fruitful is the field for abstract thinking.

VIII. Abstract Thinking

§ 9. Abstraction may be regarded as a means of eliminating the conditions of the error of ignorance. By abstraction we can so select our object that each step of cognitive process shall proceed merely from the given data to the exclusion of unexplored conditions so that the judgment depends purely on experience *a priori.* Take such a judgment as $7 + 3 = 10$. Here equality to 10 is and is meant to be something which merely depends on the nature of 7 and of 3 and on the result of the process of adding. For this reason the judgment is

called necessary. It does not therefore follow that it must be true, but only that its truth or falsehood depends on the known data and on nothing else. Hence, if it is true, it is necessarily true, and if it is false, it is necessarily false. Only one condition of error is excluded by abstraction: error will not be due to ignorance and consequent presumption on partial knowledge. None the less inadvertence and confusion may still lead to mistakes. But even these sources of illusion may disappear when the data from which we start are sufficiently simple. Thus, abstract thinking leads to a large body of knowledge which may be regarded as certain.

It may be said that abstract thinking plays tricks with its abstract object. It does not merely fasten on certain features of the actual world and consider their intrinsic nature, to the disregard of all else. It transforms the object of its selective attention and gives it forms and relations which have not been found in the actual world and perhaps may never have actual existence. The process of mathematical definition which is the very life-blood of the science consists mainly in constructions of this kind. The perfect fluid or the perfect circle of the mathematician are typical examples.

At the first blush, it would seem that in such constructions we are leaving the real world for figments of our own making. But this is not so. All such construction is in its essential import an experimental activity. In it we are active only in order that we may be passive. We operate on the object only in order that we may give it an opportunity of manifesting its own independent nature. And the object always is or ought to be some actual feature of concrete existence. The constructive process has two main functions. It may either be (1) a means of fixing and defining the abstract object in its abstractness, or (2) a way of developing its nature. Constructions of the first kind are merely instruments of selective attention—vehicles of abstraction. They enable us to represent the abstract object in such a way that we can deal with it conveniently and effectively. The conception

of a perfect fluid is an excellent example of this procedure. Fluidity actually exists in the concrete inasmuch as fluid substances actually exist. But the mathematician cannot investigate fluidity effectively under the special conditions of its existence in the particular fluids known to him, such as water. For all these fluids are only more or less fluid. They are also more or less viscous, and this introduces a complication which he is unable to disentangle. To meet this difficulty he frames the conception of a perfect fluid. In studying the perfect fluid, he investigates fluidity without reference to the complications arising from the partial viscosity of known fluids. When the conception is once formed, the perfect fluid manifests an independent nature of its own which thought does not make but finds. And whatever may be found to be true of it is true of all particular fluids in so far as they are fluid. It holds good of fluids as such. The body of judgments thus formed expresses the nature of fluidity, and fluidity is an actual feature of the concrete world. Geometrical space is a construction of a similar kind. The geometer, as such, is interested merely in the nature of space and spatial configuration. His only reason for referring to the contents of space is that the conception of figure involves demarcation of one portion of space from another by some difference of content. Otherwise, he has no concern with the particular things which are extended in space or with the physical conditions of their existence. Accordingly, he fixes and formulates his abstract object by framing the conception of a space in which the distribution of contents is to be limited by spatial conditions, and these only. This conception enables him to represent his abstract object in such a way that he can deal with it effectively, unhampered by irrelevancies.

In the second kind of construction, we develop the nature of our abstract object. We begin by distinguishing some general feature of the concrete world which is initially presented to us in certain particular forms. But as soon as we consider this feature abstractly, we discover that in its own intrinsic nature it is capable of other

determinations which have not been ascertained to exist in the concrete. Reality belongs to such constructions inasmuch as they express the real nature of a real feature of concrete existence. The determinations which we ascribe to the abstract object are not figments of our own. They are so founded in the nature of our object as to be necessarily possible. But it is only to this extent that they claim to be real. Geometrical construction furnishes a familiar example. The term *figure*, as ordinarily used, implies demarcation ; it implies the bounding off of one portion of extension from another by some difference in the character of the extended contents. Now it may be doubted [1] whether in the physical world or in our own mental imagery extended contents are ever so arranged that their boundaries form perfectly straight lines, or exactly equal lines, or perfect circles, or perfect spheres. None the less these conceptions express the actual nature of space, and to this extent they have an indisputable claim to be regarded as real. If we consider the distribution of the contents of space as conditioned only by the nature of space, it must be possible for adjoining surfaces to bound each other so as to form a perfectly straight line ; and the same holds good for other perfect figures. To understand this we must note that all demarcated figure presupposes what we may call undemarcated figure ; all delineated lines presuppose undelineated lines. A particle cannot move so as to describe a line unless the path it is to traverse already exists. In any portion of solid space there must be any number of undemarcated surfaces which are perfectly plane, and in each plane there must be any number of undemarcated lines which are perfectly straight and of circles which are perfectly circular.[2] The geometrical possibility of demarcated figures simply consists in the actual existence of corresponding undemarcated figures. From this point of view, such geometrical constructions as the perfect circle are necessarily possible. They express the actual nature of space,

[1] I do not affirm that the doubt is ultimately justified.
[2] Cf. Hallam's Criticism of Locke in his *History of European Literature.*

and are, in this sense, real. But it is only in this sense that the geometer regards them as real.

It may be said that after all we do not know whether such demarcated figures as the perfect circle ever actually exist. I reply that the geometrician does not affirm their actual existence. What he does affirm as actual is that constitution of space on which the possibility of these constructions is founded. To affirm a possibility is to affirm that certain conditions *A* actually exist, have existed, or will exist, of such a nature that if certain other conditions *B* were actualised, something else *C* would be actualised. *B* is hypothetical. *C* as dependent on *B* is also hypothetical. But *A* is actual; and apart from *A* the hypothetical proposition would have no meaning. In the present instance, *C* is the existence of such demarcated figures as the perfect circle; *B* is the existence of certain physical or psychological conditions; *A* is the actual constitution of space. It is in *A* that the geometrician is interested. Further, his insight in regard to *A* enables him to understand how and why, if *B* were actualised, *C* must necessarily be actualised. Owing to the actual nature of space as cognised by him, *C* is and is seen to be necessarily possible. Even where the connection of antecedent and consequent lacks this intelligible transparency, it still remains true that every valid hypothetical proposition expresses the actual nature of some specific reality. If certain conditions are fulfilled, this acorn will grow into an oak. This means that the actual acorn as I hold it in my hand is actually constituted in a certain manner. Similarly, the full import of any hypothetical proposition can only be expressed by translating it into a correspondingly specific categorical proposition.

As a last example of abstract thinking we may refer to the science of number. Numbered groups of existing things must be distinguished from pure number. There are, let us say, three eggs in this basket and three terms in a syllogism. Here we have only two distinct groups of three, because there are only two groups of countable things to be numbered. But if we ignore the adjectival

relation of number to something else which is counted, we find that an interminable series of groups of three is necessarily possible. It may be said that number must always be the number of something. In a sense, this is true. But the something may be anything whatever if only it is capable of being numbered. Thus pure number is not considered as an adjective of anything except of the numerable as such. This is equivalent to making it merely an adjective of itself and therefore not an adjective at all. It is not an adjective because the conception of the numerable as such is included in the abstract conception of number itself. Now pure number thus defined is certainly real inasmuch as it has a positive and determinate nature to which our thought concerning it may or may not conform. We can discover arithmetical truths and we can make arithmetical blunders. Further the field for thought which has pure number for its object is inexhaustible in range and complexity. A mind such as that of Aristotle's deity might occupy itself for ever with abstract number and nothing else to all eternity without exhausting its resources. So long as it was interested in this object there would be no reason why it should turn to any other.

IX. Certainty

§ 10. In the initial statement of our problem stress was laid on the apparent fact that the unreal in erroneous belief is present to consciousness in the same manner as the real in true belief. We have now to point out that this is not always so. It is not so where the essential conditions of the possibility of error are absent. For, in such cases, a question answers itself so as to render doubt meaningless. This holds good for my assertion of my own existence as a conscious being and for such propositions as "$2 + 1 = 3$" or "Trilateral figures are triangular." In instances of this kind we can raise a doubt only by abandoning the proper question for another which is irrelevant. We may, for instance, ask: How far can we trust our faculties? But

inquiries of this sort are futile and even nonsensical. They presuppose a meaningless separation of the thinking process from what is thought of, and then proceed to ask how far the thinking process, regarded merely as someone's private psychical affection can be "trusted" to reveal a reality extraneous to it. In all *cognition*, what we "trust" is not the psychical process of thinking or perceiving, but the thing itself which is thought of or perceived—the thing concerning which we raise a question.

It is urged by Mr. Bradley that all propositions, except perhaps certain assertions concerning the Absolute as such, must be more or less erroneous. His reason is that they are all conditional and that their conditions are never fully known. Whatever exists, exists within the universe and it is conditioned by the whole constitution of the universe. But if what exists within a whole is conditioned by so existing, no assertion as to what exists is true if stated apart from this condition. This argument seems to involve a confusion. It confuses conditions of the truth of a proposition with conditions of that which is stated in the proposition.[1] When I say,—"If this witness is to be trusted, Jones committed the theft," the "if" introduces a condition of the first kind. It suggests uncertainty. When I say, "If a figure is trilateral it is triangular," the "if" introduces a condition of the second kind. It does not suggest uncertainty. My own existence as a conscious being has conditions far too complex and obscure for me to discover. But these conditions do not condition the truth of the proposition that I exist. The inverse is the case. Because I am certain that I exist, I am certain that all the conditions of my existence, whatever they may be, exist also. Be they what they may, they are all logically included in the import of my thought when I affirm my own existence.

Mr. Bradley's contention seems to rest on the assumption that, unless the universe is completely known, every

[1] This distinction corresponds in principle with that drawn by Mr. W. E. Johnson, between Conditional and Hypothetical propositions. Cf. Keynes, *Formal Logic*, pp. 271 *seq.*

assertion or denial about its contents must be liable to the error of ignorance, or rather, must actually incur the error of ignorance. Since we do not know everything, it is assumed that there always may be, or rather, must be something unknown which would be seen to falsify our judgment if we knew it. But this view is untenable if we are right in maintaining that there are limits to the possibility of error. Unexplored conditions can affect the truth of a statement only in so far as they are relevant, and their relevancy in each case depends on the nature of the question raised. Suppose the question to be, What is the sum of two and two? By the very nature of the problem there can be no relevant data except just two and two considered as forming a sum of countable units. It may be urged that perhaps the numbers to be added do not exist, or that they may be incapable of forming a sum. But these doubts become meaningless as soon as we try to count. If there is nothing to count there can be no counting. But the supposition is absurd. Suppose, *per impossibile*, that we fail to find anything to count in the first instance. Our failure may then be counted as one thing and the act of counting it may be counted as another, and this second act of counting as yet another, and so on *ad infinitum*.

To pursue this topic farther would lead outside the limits of the present essay. It is enough here to insist that there is such a thing as logically unconditioned truth. In order to attain absolute knowledge, it is by no means necessary to wait until we have attained an adequate knowledge of the absolute. The truth of judgments concerning what is real is not logically dependent on the truth of judgments concerning "Reality" with a capital R.[1]

[1] I am aware that this essay is likely to raise more questions in the reader's mind than it even attempts to solve. Some of these I hope to deal with in the future; *e.g.* the relation of the universal to the particular, the nature of the material world, and the nature and possibility of thought as dependent on the constitution of the Absolute. In dealing with these topics, I hope to develop more fully the grounds of that divergence from Mr. Bradley which is referred to in § 10 and implied elsewhere.

II

AXIOMS AS POSTULATES

By F. C. S. Schiller

I. The Growth of Experience

1. Agreement that the world is experience + connecting principles—why we should start rather than conclude with this.
2. But (*a*) *whose* experience? Ours. Why self cannot be analysed away; why knowledge of self depends on experience.
3. (*b*) Experience *of what?* The world. But what the world is, it is not yet possible to say completely.
4. (1) The World not ready-made datum but constructed by a process of evolution,
5. (2) *i.e.* of *trial* or experiment—original flexibility or indeterminateness of world. Experiment suggested by practical needs—conscious and unconscious experimenting.
6. (3) Limits of experimenting—'matter' as resisting medium—impossibility of saying what it is in itself. Conception of material world developing in experience. Value of Aristotelian description of a ὕλη capable of being moulded.
7. (4) The 'World,' therefore, is what is made of it—plastic. How far, to be determined only by trying. But methodologically plasticity assumed to be complete. Provisional character of our 'facts.'
8. Bearing of this '*pragmatism*' or '*radical empiricism*' on the nature of axioms. Their origin as postulates to which we try to get world to conform. Contrast with the old empiricism and apriorism.

II. Criticism of Empiricism

9. (1) Its standpoint psychological, (2) intellectualist, (3) axioms presupposed in the experience which is supposed to impress them on us—Mill's admissions, (4) derivation not historical, but *ex post facto* reconstruction, (5) its incompleteness, (6) impossibility of really tracing development of axioms and so unprogressiveness.

III. Criticism of Apriorism

10-25. Its superficial plausibility and real obscurity. Fallacy of inferring from § 9 (3) that there are *a priori* truths.

11. How postulates also yield 'universality' and 'necessity.' 'Necessity' and need.

12. 'Condition of all possible experience' means? Might be (1) cause or *psychical* antecedent, (2) presupposition of reflection (*logical*), or (3) *ethical* or *æsthetical*. Objections.
13. Meaning of '*a priori*'; (1) *logical* or (2) *psychological?* Equivocations of apriorist authority.
14-18. *The a priori as logical.* But why analyse in Kant's way? *Exclusive* correctness of Kantian analysis not to be based either (1) on its *a priori* truth, or (2) on experience of its satisfactory working. Else why should Kantians have tried to better it?
15. Kant's derivation of his analysis from psychology.
16. Even if it were satisfactory, no proof that it would be the only or the best possible.
17. If *a priori* is not in time, its superiority to the *a posteriori* merely honorific.
18. Kant's analysis neither simple nor lucid.
19-22. *A priori as psychical fact.* But if so, has it (1) been correctly described? (2) how is it distinguished from innate idea? (3) does not epistemology merge in psychology?
20. As facts *a priori* truths have a history, which must be inquired into.
21. *A priori* faculties tautologous, and
22. should not be treated as ultimate.
23. Result that science of epistemology rests on systematic confusion of alternative interpretations of apriority. The proper extension of logic and psychology.
24. Intellectualism of both apriorism and empiricism incapacitates them from recognising unity and activity of organism. How this may be recognised by deriving axioms from a volitional source by postulation.
25. Kant's recognition of postulation in ethics—its conflict with his 'critical' theory of knowledge—resulting dualism intolerable. Hence either (1) suppress the Practical Reason or preferably (2) extend postulation to Theoretic Reason.

IV. Some Characteristics of Postulation

26. Postulates at first tentative and not always successful—their various stages and common origin—the theoretic possibility of changing axioms not practically to be feared.
27. Postulates not a coherent system *inter se* except as rooted in personality.

V. The Postulation of Identity

28. Not to be derived out of nothing, but out of a prior psychical fact on the sentient level of consciousness—why consciousness itself cannot be derived—its characteristics on the sentient level.
29. Hence identity (of self) first *felt* in the coherence and continuity of mental processes, and forms basis for the postulation of identity—the practical necessity of recognising the 'same' in the 'like.'
30. Once postulated, identity proves a great success, though never completely realised in fact. Stages of identity-postulation: (1) recognition of others and objects of perception. But these change and so do not provide a stable standard of comparison. Hence (2) postulation of ideally identical selves.
31. (3) Meaning demands absolute identity and recognition leads to cognition—advantage of classification by 'universals' which abstract from differences.

32. (4) The use of language, *i.e. identifiable symbols*, connected with the demand for identity.
33. Logical bearings of this doctrine. The practical purpose of the judgment as the clue to the meaning of predication and as determining the limits to which abstraction shall be carried.
34. Limitations and conventions on which the logical use of identity depends.

VI. Other Postulates

35. The concurrent development of consciousness of 'self' and 'other' = the 'external world,' postulated to account for felt unsatisfactoriness of experience.
39. Postulation of Contradiction and Excluded Middle.
37. Hypothesis a form of postulation.
38. Causation a demand for *something* whereby we can control events. Its various formulations relative to our purposes. Sufficient Reason. The absolutely satisfactory as 'self-evident.' The infinite regress of reasons and causes limited by the purpose of the inquiry.
39. Postulate of 'Uniformity of Nature.' Suggested by gleams of regularity amid primitive chaos. Methodological advantage of postulating complete regularity. Its practical success.
40-3. *The Space and Time Postulates.* Kant's *reine Anschauung* a hybrid between perception and conception and so a confusion of psychology and logic. Really psychological data have served as basis for conceptual constructions which are methodological postulates.
41. Construction of physical space out of sensory data. Geometrical space a construction to calculate behaviour of real bodies. Antithesis between qualities of perceptual and conceptual space—reasons for postulating the latter.
42. Alternative conceptual constructions of 'metageometry.' Their obscurity due to their greater complexity and uselessness. A conceptual space is *valid* in so far as *useful*, but never *real*.
43. Time: (1) subjective, (2) objective, (3) conceptual. (1) Too variable to be useful, (2) a social necessity, but relative, (3) a postulate.
44. Other postulates, *e.g.* substance, passed over.
45-7. *Postulates not yet fully axiomatic.* (1) Teleology—its derivation from the postulate of knowableness. Necessity of anthropomorphism. Rational human action teleological. Why this is not extended by science to nature. Its misuse by professed believers—possibility of future use.
46. Ultimately mechanical methods imply teleology, assuming that world is *partly* conformable to our ideals. But part being given, we must assume all. Postulation as illustrating the teleology of axioms.
47. (2) Religious postulates—personality and goodness of God—immortality.

VII. Concluding Reflections

48. The psychological possibility of instinctive postulation and its relation to logical justification.
49. The method of origins never gives complete explanation. But validity must be connected with origin. Completeness unattainable while knowledge is still growing.
50. Effects on philosophy—a return to practice and a perception of the inadequacy of intellectualism.

51. Belief in the alleged incompetence of the reason due to (1) the putting of questions which have no practical value and ultimate meaning, (2) 'antinomies.' But these at bottom volitional and due to a refusal to choose between conflicting aims. *E.g.* the 'insoluble mystery of evil.' Methodological necessity of assuming all real problems to be soluble.

52. Gain to philosophy because (1) more responsibility felt about *voluntary* confusions of thought which (2) are more easily remedied and to which (3) the young are not pledged. Invigorating effect of Pragmatism.

I

§ 1. THE first survey of his subject ought to be sufficient to appal the intending writer on almost any philosophic topic. The extent, variety, and persistence of the divergences of opinion which he finds are such that he needs to be possessed of unusual faith and courage not to despair of convincing even an unprejudiced reader—and in philosophy where shall he be found?—that his undertaking holds out any prospect of scientific advance. For it needs no little philosophic insight to perceive that these divergences, instead of discrediting Philosophy, are really a subtle tribute to its dignity. They testify that in our final attitude towards life our *whole personality* must be concerned, and tend to form the decisive factor in the adoption of a metaphysic. As soon as a metaphysic attempts to be more than 'a critical study of First Prejudices,' and essays to be constructive, it will always come upon a region where different men argue differently, and yet with equal cogency, from (apparently) the same premisses. The most reasonable explanation of this phenomenon is to admit that as the men *are* different, and differ in their experience, neither the data which have to be valued, nor the standards by which they are valued, can really be the same. Indeed, the whole history of philosophy shows that the fit of a man's philosophy is (and ought to be) as individual as the fit of his clothes, and forms a crushing commentary on the intolerant craving for uniformity which ineffectually attempts to anticipate the slow achievement of a real harmony by the initial fallacies and brusque assumptions of a 'cheap

and easy' monism. It behoves the true philosopher, therefore, to be tolerant, and to recognise that so long as men *are* different, their metaphysics *must be* different, and that even so, nay for this very reason, any philosophy is better than none at all.

But though the ultimate differences of philosophic opinion are probably too deeply rooted in human idiosyncrasy to be eradicated by any force of argument, it is none the less conducive to the progress of every philosophic discussion that some common ground of (at least apparent and preliminary) agreement should be found on which the rival views may test their strength. This is accordingly what I have tried to do, though it was not without difficulty that I seemed to discover two fundamental points of initial agreement which would, I think, be admitted by nearly all who have any understanding of the terms employed in philosophic discussion. The first of these is that the whole world in which we live is experience and built up out of nothing else than experience. The second is that experience, nevertheless, does not, alone and by itself, constitute reality, but, to construct a world, needs certain assumptions, connecting principles, or fundamental truths, in order that it may organise its crude material and transmute itself into palatable, manageable, and liveable forms.

Acceptance of these two propositions does not perhaps carry us far, and I have no desire to exaggerate its controversial value. For, as soon as we attempt to go a step farther and ask what, more precisely, is this experience, out of which, and for the sake of which, it is agreed that all things are constructed, we speedily realise that we have, here also, stumbled unwittingly into a very quagmire of metaphysical perplexities. It is indeed a convenient fashion in high philosophic quarters to treat the harmless truism with the enunciation of which I have ventured to start, as the final term in a protracted course of dialectical philosophy, and to put forward Experience (written of course with very large capitals) as the ultimate explanation of all things. My excuse for not treating my

readers (if any) to a similar performance must be that I have neither the heart nor the head for feats of this kind, and that they can always fall back upon the consoling dictum that experience is Experience (with the addition 'of the Absolute' thrown in, if they are very inquisitive), when they have found that my explorations in a very different direction lead to nothing interesting or valuable.

§ 2. I shall accordingly proceed to divide my question into two. If all the world be experience and what is needed to understand that experience, (1) *whose* experience is it? and (2) *of what* is it experience? To both questions again some will be satisfied to reply—'of the Absolute, of course.' If that really contents them, and is all they wish to know, they had better read no further. For my part I hold that this answer, even if it were true and intelligible, is of no scientific or practical value whatsoever, and hence cannot be of any philosophic value either, except to votaries of philosophies which have no scientific or practical value.

To the first question, therefore, I shall make bold to answer, '*our* experience,' or, if that imply too much agreement among philosophers, and I may not take a common world for granted, more precisely, '*my* experience.'

Here again I must be prepared to be assailed by a furious band of objectors intent on asking me—"Who are you? How dare you take yourself for granted? Have you not heard how the self is a complex psychological product, which may be derived and analysed away in a dozen different ways? And do you actually propose to build your philosophy upon so discredited a foundation?"

To all this the simplicity of my humble reply may, I fear, be thought to savour of impertinence. I shall merely say "Abate your wrath, good sirs, I beseech you. I am right well aware of what you urge. Only I have observed also a few facts which in your scientific zeal you have been pleased to overlook. In the first place I notice that these analyses of the self you allude to are various,

and that so the self may find safety in the very multitude of its tormentors. I observe, secondly, that the analysis is in every case effected by a self. And it always gives me a turn when the conclusion of an argument subverts its own premiss. Next I note that these analyses being the products of a self, must, if that self is (like my own) rational, serve some purpose. But unless that purpose is the highest of all (which in your case I see no reason to suppose), the validity of the whole procedure will be relative, and its value methodological. It may be excellent, therefore, for your purposes and quite unsuitable for mine. And, lastly, I observe that an analysis does not fall from heaven ready made; it is the product of a purposive activity, and however appalling it may sound, it remains *brutum fulmen* until such time as somebody *chooses* to adopt it. It is from this act of choice, then, that its real efficacy springs, and if I *choose* to analyse differently or not at all, if I find it convenient to operate with the *whole* organism as the standard unit in my explications, what right have Scribes and Pharisees to complain? For in either case the choice must be justified by its consequences, by the experience of its working, and I am not aware that anything valuable or workable has resulted from the psychological analyses in question. I am therefore sanguine that the assumption of my own existence, which I provisionally make, may very possibly turn out better and be less futile than any of the denials of the self which it may seem convenient to maintain for certain restricted and technical purposes of psychologies which neglect their proper problem in their anxiety to be ranked among the 'natural sciences.'

"As for the other, personal, question—'Who am I?'—*that* we shall see. I say *we* pointedly, because, to be quite frank, I too am still learning what I am, by experience. For unfortunately I was as little endowed with any *a priori* knowledge of myself as of anything else. Hence I can only say, provisionally, that I am *at least* what I am, and what I am capable of becoming. For I have a notion that my career is not yet over. In saying this

I do not, of course, lay claim to anything unknowable; I only mean that I am not anything completely known, either to myself or any one else, until I cease to have *new* experience. And if you are content to share these humble attributes and to be selves in this sense, you are very welcome!"

§ 3. I come next to the second question—*what* is it I experience? The answer must be very similar. My knowledge of the object of experience—we may call it 'the world' for short—is still imperfect and still growing. And so though I may provisionally describe it by all the ordinary phrases as 'external,' and material, and spatial, and temporal, I do not attach much value to them, and cannot honestly say that I know what it ultimately is. For I do not know what it will ultimately turn into. Not of course that I despair on that account of ultimately answering this question also to everybody's satisfaction (and especially to my own!). Only the world of knowledge always seems to be painted on an uncompleted background of the unknown, and fresh knowledge is always coming in which modifies the total impression. This knowledge is largely (or perhaps wholly) the result of guesses which I cannot help making, like my fathers before me, for practical reasons. As for the character and the details of these guesses, are they not written in the histories of human sciences and religions?

§ 4. In reflecting on these histories, however, I observe several things which seem to have no slight bearing on the question of the nature of the world and our knowledge.

(1) The world, as it now appears, was not a ready-made datum; it is the fruit of a long evolution, of a strenuous struggle. If we have learnt enough philosophy to see that we must not only ask the ontological question, *What is it?* but also the profounder epistemological question to which it leads, *How do we know what it is?* we shall realise that it is a *construction* which has been gradually achieved, and that the toil thereof dwarfs into insignificance the proverbial labour *Romanam condere gentem.* As a rule we do not notice this, partly

because we are taught to neglect the history of ideas for the sake of burdening our memory with the history of events (which very likely did not happen in the manner alleged), partly because the sciences have a habit of evading the verbal confession of the changes which the growth of knowledge has wrought in their conceptions. Thus the physicist continues to use the term 'matter,' although it has come to mean for him something very different from the simple experiences of hardness and resistance from which its development began, and although he more and more clearly sees both that he does not know what 'matter' ultimately is, and that for the purposes of his science he does not need to know, so long as the term stands for something the behaviour of which he can calculate.

§ 5. (2) I observe that since we do not know what the world is, we have to find out. This we do *by trying*. Not having a ready-made world presented to us the knowledge of which we can suck in with a passive receptivity (or rather, *appearing to have* such a world to some extent only in consequence of the previous efforts of our forerunners), we have to make experiments in order to construct out of the materials we start with a harmonious cosmos which will satisfy all our desires (that for knowledge included). For this purpose we make use of every means that seems promising: we try it and *we try it on*. For we cannot afford to remain unresistingly passive, to be impressed, like the *tabula rasa*[1] in the traditional fiction, by an independent 'external world' which stamps itself upon us. If we did that, we should be stamped out. But experience is always more than this: it is either experiment or *reaction*, reaction upon stimulation, which latter we ascribe to the 'external world.' But reaction is still a kind of action, and its character still depends in part on the reacting agent. Nor have we any independent knowledge of the 'external

[1] It is hard to say why this inadequate illustration should continue to haunt philosophic discussion, the more so as it always missed the point. For as Lotze has so well observed the 'receptivity' of the tablet is really due to the intrinsic nature of the wax and not to an absence of positive character.

world'; it is merely the systematic way in which we construct the source of the stimulation on which we feel ourselves to be reacting. Hence even our most passive receptivity of sensations can, and should, be construed as the effortless fruition of what was once acquired by strenuous effort, rather than as the primal type to which all experience should be reduced. In it we are living on our capital (inherited or acquired), not helping to carve out ('create') the cosmos,[1] but enjoying the fruits of our labours (or of those of others!). Which is pleasant, but not interesting. What is interesting is the course of the active experimenting which results in the arts, the sciences, and the habits on which our social organisation rests.

I proceed accordingly to consider the mass of experiments which collectively make up the world-process and by their issue determine the subsequent course of affairs. At the outset there seems to be nothing determined, certain, or fixed about it. We may indeed shrink from the assertion of an absolute indeterminism, but it is certain that we cannot say what made or determined the character of the first reaction, and that the first establishment of a habit of reaction is a matter of immense difficulty. And to a less extent this indeterminateness persists as the structure of the cosmos grows. The world is always ambiguous, always impels us at certain points to say, 'it may be,' 'either . . . or,' etc.[2] Nor were it well that it should grow rigid, unless we were assured that it would set in forms we could not wish to change. As it is, we have no absolute nor initial rigidity. All determinations are acquired, all are ratified, by their working;

[1] It is significant that most of the words which have been used to express the conception (?) of creation are metaphors which meant originally to hew or shape. For if, as seems probable, the conception of absolute 'creation' ('out of nothing') be ultimately unthinkable, the assumed 'metaphor' will be able to supply the true conception.

[2] We do not, of course, affect the fact by assuming its absolute determination, 'if only we knew all.' For this is merely a postulate, devised to keep us in good heart while calculating, and in order that we may be able to forecast the future. We *may be* able to achieve the realisation of this ideal in a cosmos absolutely determined and absolutely satisfactory, but at present it is not true that *for us practically* all things are determined.

nothing can be said to be absolutely exempt from modification and amendment by experience of its working.

The intellectual cosmos also neither has nor needs fixed foundations whose fixity is an illusion. Like the physical universe it is sustained by the correspondence and interplay of its parts; or, if we prefer it, floats freely in a sea of the unknown, which now and again buffets it with its waves, but across which the sciences have established well-travelled routes of intellectual intercourse.

The cosmos grows, as we have said, by experiment. Such experiment may have been random at first (as for methodological purposes we shall be prone to assume); at all events it was vague, and its prescience of its issue was probably obscure. In any case its direction is ultimately determined not so much by its initial gropings as by the needs of life and the desires which correspond to those needs. Thus the logical structures of our mental organisation are the product of psychological functions.[1]

It must next be admitted that when it is said that the world is constructed by experiment, the conception of experiment is taken very widely and in a way that extends far beyond the conscious experiment of the scientist who is fully aware of what he does and what he wants, and precisely controls all the conditions. Of the 'experimenting' which builds up the cosmos the scientific experiment is only an extreme case which even now is comparatively rarely realised. Most of the experimenting that goes on is blind or very dimly prescient, semi-conscious or quite unconscious. To what extent there is consciousness of the experimenting depends of course on the mental development of the beings engaged in it; for while in the lowest it is infinitesimal, the more intelligent they become the more capable they are of taking the experimenting into their own hands.

But from the experimenting itself there is no escape;

[1] In this aspect logic is related to psychology as morphology is to physiology. A 'logical necessity,' therefore, always rests upon, issues from, and is discovered by, a psychological need. Dr. Bosanquet adopts the comparison, but does not work it out, in his *Logic*.

it goes on, and if we refuse to experiment, we *are experimented with*. Nay, in this sense we are all nature's experiments, attempts to build up a world of beings that can maintain themselves permanently and harmoniously. We are asked as it were, "Can you do this?" and if we cannot or will not, and "do not answer," we are eliminated. The elimination which is involved in this experimenting habit of nature's has in modern times been widely recognised, under the name of Natural Selection; its essence is that a large number of individuals and varieties should be produced *on trial* (as 'accidental variations' or *θείᾳ μοίρᾳ*), and that upon those that stood their trials best should devolve the duty of carrying on the world. The conception of Natural Selection was suggested by human selection; its procedure by trying is so far analogous to that of our own intelligence, and it is denied to be that of an intelligence only because of a misunderstanding of the methodological character of the postulate of indefinite variation.[1] We may therefore plausibly contend that if a superhuman intelligence is active in the forming of the cosmos, its methods and its nature are the same as ours; it also proceeds by experiment, and adapts means to ends, and learns from experience.

We see then that there are two excellent reasons for conceiving the notion of experiment so broadly. In the first place it becomes possible thereby to comprehend under one head the infinite complications and gradations which are possible in the consciousness of the experimenter, from the most random restlessness and the most blindly instinctive adaptations, to the most clearly conscious testing of an elaborate theory; in the second, it serves to bring out the radically tentative tendency which runs through the whole cosmos. And if the propriety of a phrase may be held to atone for the impropriety of a pun, we may sum up our result by saying that the clue to experience must be found not in words but in deeds, and that the method of nature and the true method of philosophy is not a *Dialectic* but a *Trialectic*.

[1] Cf. *Contemp. Rev.*, June 1897, p. 878.

§ 6. (3) In describing our activity in constructing the world by experimenting or making trial, I may seem to have ignored the subject-matter of the experiment, *that in which* and the conditions *under which* we experiment. But of course I have no intention of denying the existence of this factor in our experience and, consequently, in our world. We never experiment *in vacuo*; we always start from, and are limited by, conditions of some sort. Just as our experiment must have some psychological motive to prompt it and to propel us, so it must be conditioned by a resisting something, in overcoming which, by skilfully adapting the means at our disposal, intelligence displays itself. Let it be observed, therefore, that our activity always meets with resistance, and that in consequence we often fail in our experiments.

But while there can be no dispute as to the fact of this resistance, there may be not a little as to its nature, and no slight difficulty about defining it with precision. It would be pushing Idealism to an unprofitable extreme to revert at this point to the ancient phrases about the Self positing its Other and so forth. But the opposite and more usual device of dubbing it an objective or material world which exercises compulsion upon us, is also not free from objection.

For what is so misleading about this traditional manner of talking is that it implies just what we have seen to be untrue, viz. that there is an objective world given independently of us and constraining us to recognise it. Whereas really it is never an independent fact, but ever an aspect in our experience, or better still, a persisting factor in it, which we can neither isolate nor get rid of. Hence, however far back we essay to trace it, we can never say either what it is really and in itself, or that it has disappeared. If we take it as it appears in our experience as now organised, we are, similarly, met with the difficulty that what it now is is nothing definitive, but merely a term in a long development the end of which is not yet in sight. And if, led by such

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considerations, we look forward and declare that the objective world most truly is whatever it develops into, who will take it upon himself to prophesy concerning its future developments, and guarantee that it will always remain objective in the way it is at present, that it will continue to resist and constrain? For already it is only partially true that it constrains us; it is becoming increasingly true that we constrain it, and succeed in moulding it into acceptable shapes. In what sense, therefore, should we continue to call 'objective' a world which had ceased to be objectionable and had become completely conformable and immediately responsive to our every desire?

The truest account, then, it would seem possible to give of this resisting factor in our experience is to revive, for the purpose of its description, the old Aristotelian conception of 'Matter' as *ὕλη δεκτικὴ τοῦ εἴδους*, as potentiality of whatever form we succeed in imposing on it. It may be regarded as the raw material of the cosmos (never indeed wholly raw and unworked upon), out of which have to be hewn the forms of life in which our spirit can take satisfaction. To have lost this sense of 'matter,' in the effort to render its notion more precise and useful for the purposes of the natural sciences, is a real loss to philosophy. And yet the notion of matter as an indeterminate potentiality which, under the proper manipulations, can assume the forms we will, reasserts itself *de facto* whenever the great physicists set themselves to speculate respecting the 'ultimate constitution of Matter.' For provided only that their results enable them to calculate, more or less, the behaviour of sensible matter, they never hesitate to calculate into existence new 'ethers' and modes of matter and to endow them with whatever qualities their purpose demands and their imagination suggests.

§ 7. (4) The world, then, is essentially *ὕλη*, it is what we make of it. It is fruitless to define it by what it originally was or by what it is apart from us (*ἡ ὕλη ἄγνωστος καθ' αὑτὴν*); it *is* what is made of it. Hence

my fourth and most important point is that the world is *plastic*, and may be moulded by our wishes, if only we are determined to give effect to them, and not too conceited to learn from experience, *i.e.* by trying, *by what means* we may do so.

That this plasticity exists will hardly be denied, but doubts may be raised as to how far it extends. Surely, it may be objected, it is mere sarcasm to talk of the plasticity of the world; in point of fact we can never go far in any direction without coming upon rigid limits and insuperable obstacles. The answer surely is that the extent of the world's plasticity is not known *a priori*, but must be found out by trying. Now in trying we can never start with a recognition of rigid limits and insuperable obstacles. For if we believed them such, it would be *no use* trying. Hence we must assume that we can obtain what we want, if only we try skilfully and perseveringly enough. A failure only proves that the obstacles would not yield to the method employed: it cannot extinguish the hope that by *trying again* by other methods they could finally be overcome.

Thus it is a *methodological necessity* to assume that the world is *wholly plastic*, *i.e.* to *act as though* we believed this, and will yield us what we want, if we persevere in wanting it.

To what extent our assumption is true in the fullest sense, *i.e.* to what extent it will work in practice, time and trial will show. But our faith is confirmed whenever, by acting on it, we obtain anything we want; it is checked, but not uprooted, whenever an experiment fails.

As a first attempt to explain how our struggle to mould our experience into conformity with our desires is compatible with the 'objectivity' of that experience, the above may perhaps suffice, though I do not flatter myself that it will at once implant conviction. Indeed I expect rather to be asked indignantly—'Is there not an objective nature which our experiments do not make, but only discover? Is it not absurd to talk as if our attempts could alter the facts? And is not reverent submission to

this pre-existing order the proper attitude of the searcher after truth?'

The objection is so obvious that the folly of ignoring it could only be exceeded by that of exaggerating its importance. It is because of the gross way in which this is commonly done that I have thought it salutary to emphasise the opposite aspect of the truth. We have heard enough, and more than enough, about the duty of humility and submission; it is time that we were told that energy and enterprise also are indispensable, and that as soon as the submission advocated is taken to mean more than rational methods of investigation, it becomes a hindrance to the growth of knowledge. Hence it is no longer important to rehearse the old platitudes about sitting at the feet of nature and servilely accepting the kicks she finds it so much cheaper to bestow than half-pence. It is far more important to emphasise the other side of the matter, viz. that unless we ask, we get nothing. We must ask often and importunately, and be slow to take a refusal. It is only by asking that we discover whether or not an answer is attainable, and if they cannot alter the 'facts,' our demands can at least make them appear in so different a light, that they are no longer *practically* the same.

For in truth these independent 'facts,' which we have merely to acknowledge, are a mere figure of speech. The growth of experience is continually transfiguring our 'facts' for us, and it is only by an *ex post facto* fiction that we declare them to have been 'all along' what they have *come to mean for us*. To the vision of the rudimentary eye the world is *not* coloured; it becomes so only to the eye which has developed colour 'sensitiveness': just so the 'fact' of each phase of experience is relative to our knowledge, and that knowledge depends on our efforts and desires to know. Or, if we cling to the notion of an absolutely objective fact of which the imperfect stages of knowledge only catch distorted glimpses, we must at least admit that only a final and perfect rounding-off of knowledge would be adequate to the cognition of such

fact. The facts therefore which *we* as yet encounter are not of this character: it may turn out that they are not what they seem and can be transfigured if we try. Hence the antithesis of subjective and objective is a false one: in the process of experience 'subject' and 'object' are only the poles, and the 'subject' is the 'positive' pole from which proceeds the impetus to the growth of knowledge. For the modifications in the world, which we desire, can only be brought about by our assuming them to be possible, and *therefore* trying to effect them. There is no revelation either of nature or of God, except to those who have opened their eyes; and we at best are still self-blinded puppies.

Even the notion that the appearances which reality assumes to our eyes may depend on the volitional attitude which we maintain towards them is a truism rather than an absurdity,[1] and nothing is more reasonable than to suppose that if there be anything *personal* at the bottom of things, the way we behave to it *must* affect the way it behaves to us. The true absurdity, therefore, lies in our ignoring the most patent facts of experience in order to set up the Moloch of a rigid, immutable and inexorable Order of Nature, to which we must ruthlessly immolate all our desires, all our impulses, all our aspirations, and all our ingenuity, including that which has devised the very idol to which it is sacrificed!

§ 8. The above sketch of the nature and manner of the process which has moulded us and the world of our experience may have seemed to bear but remotely on the relations of Axioms to Postulates. In reality, however, it will be found that the whole subsequent argument has already had its main lines mapped out by our introductory discussion of the *Weltanschauung* which Prof. James has called *pragmatism* and *radical empiricism*.[2] For when, —

[1] Cf. James' *Will to believe*, pp. 28, 61, 103 foll. And it is, of course, psychologically true that not only our *delusions* but also our *perceptions* depend on what we come prepared to perceive.

[2] Regarded as labels perhaps, neither of these terms is quite satisfactory. But as philosophic, like political, parties are commonly named (or nicknamed) by their opponents, it would be premature to attempt fixity of nomenclature until criticism has had its say.

as we must do, we apply it to the theory of our cognitive faculties and the first principles whereby in knowledge we elaborate our experience (§ 1), it leads to a very distinctive treatment of epistemological problems, differing widely from those traditionally in vogue. It follows that the general structure of the mind and the fundamental principles that support it also must be conceived as growing up, like the rest of our powers and activities, that is, by a process of experimenting, designed to render the world conformable to our wishes. They will begin their career, that is, as *demands* we make upon our experience or in other words as *postulates*, and their subsequent sifting, which promotes some to be axioms and leads to the abandonment of others, which it turns out to be too expensive or painful to maintain, will depend on the experience of their working.

The contrast with both of the traditional accounts of the matter, both that of the old empiricism and of epistemological apriorism is well marked, and I hope to show that its superiority is no less palpabie.

The truth is that both the traditional accounts of the nature of Axioms are demonstrably wrong, and though to give such a demonstration may appear a digression, it will ultimately facilitate our progress. I shall accordingly indulge in a criticism, which will show that the axiomatic first principles, whereby we organise and hold together our knowledge, are neither the products of a passive experiencing, nor yet ultimate and inexplicable laws or facts of our mental structure, which require from us no effort to attain comprehension but only recognition and reverence as '*a priori* necessary truths.' In the case of empiricism the criticism will be comparatively brief and easy, because its inadequacy is pretty generally conceded ; apriorism will demand a lengthier and more difficult discussion, because it has attempted to conceal its inadequacy behind so many technicalities of language, so many obscurities of argumentation and a fundamental duplicity in its standpoint.

II

§ 9. Taking then the old empiricism first, we observe that there seems to be little doubt about its standpoint. Its derivation of the axioms is frankly psychological, and describes how the mind may be conceived actually to come by them. Its psychology is doubtless mistaken, and its recourse to psychology to settle the problem of knowledge may often be crudely worded, but it propounds a definite method of answering a real question. And we are at least free from the perplexities which arise in apriorism when an argument is conducted on two planes at once, the psychological and the epistemological (logical), and the relations of the two are left carefully undefined.

Secondly, it should be noted that empiricist psychology is at bottom quite as much infected with intellectualism as that of the apriorists. It conceives, that is, the experience which yields the elements of our mental structure as cognitive ('impressions,' 'ideas,' etc.); it does not place the central function of mental life in volitional striving and selective attention. Now intellectualism, though it may lend itself to many descriptive purposes in psychology and hence will probably never wholly disappear, is ultimately a misdescription of mental life even as psychology, while it is essentially incapable of connecting itself with the wider biological context, in which the organism is conceived as reacting on its environment, or with the higher ethical plane, on which it is conceived as a responsible *person*.

I pass to the graver counts of the indictment. Empiricism conceived a purely passive mind as being moulded by an already made external world into correspondence with itself in the course of a process of experience which overcame whatever native refractoriness the mind possessed.[1] Hence we come by our belief that every event has a cause in consequence of the *fact* that there are causes in nature, and that this eventually impresses itself

[1] It is thus the exact converse of the account given above (§ 6) in which moulding activity was due to 'mind,' and resistance to 'matter.'

upon us ; two and two make four, because there are units which behave so, and we must count them thus and not otherwise, though in another world, as Mill consistently observed, they might insist on making five, and force upon us a new arithmetic. So also it is because nature *is* uniform that an unbroken series of inductions *per enumerationem simplicem* hammers into us the principle of the 'uniformity of nature.'

To all this the fatal objection holds that these principles cannot be extracted from experience because they must already be possessed before experience can confirm them. Hume's simple discovery, that the connection of events which all assume is never a fact of observation, is as awkward for empiricism as for apriorism. Unless, therefore, we look upon the succession of events as possibly regular, it can yield no evidence of a principle of regularity ; until we count them, things are not numbered, until we look for order, order does not appear. In the case of the uniformity of nature Mill indeed practically concedes this ; he admits (*Logic*, bk. iii. ch. iii. § 2, and ch. vii. § 1) that "nature not only is uniform, but is also infinitely various," that some phenomena "seem altogether capricious," and that "the order of nature as perceived at a first glance presents at every instant a chaos followed by another chaos." Now if this is still true of the impression produced on us by nature, whenever we assume the receptive attitude of a disinterested observer, how much more of a chaos must nature have appeared to the primitive intelligence which had yet to lay down the fundamental principles of cosmic order?[1]

The truth is that the whole empiricist account of the derivation of axioms is *not* psychological history experienced by the primitive mind : like so much 'inductive logic' it is at best an *ex post facto* reinterpretation (for logical purposes) of such experience by a reflecting mind which has already grasped, and long used, the principles

[1] There is of course ample evidence that this was actually felt to be the case. Primitive animism is (*inter alia*) an explanation of the material chaos of experience by a corresponding spiritual chaos, conceived as rather more manageable.

of cosmic order. To the primitive mind such principles can at most be *suggested* by the regularity of phenomena like, *e.g.*, the alternation of day and night, or of organic habits (breathing, heartbeat, hunger, etc.) already acquired before reflection begins; but if mere experience were the source of axioms, such suggestions of regularity would necessarily have their effect effaced by the preponderantly chaotic character of the bulk of experience, and would be swept away by a cataract of 'lawless' impressions.

Again it is incumbent on us to note the difficulty of generalising the empiricist derivation of Axioms: though Empiricism is over 2000 years old, it has never been completely carried out, and few indeed would be found to envy the empiricist the task, *e.g.* of adequately deriving the Principle of Identity.

And lastly, it affords just ground for complaint that empiricism as it stands, does not really satisfy the desire the appeal to which constituted its chief charm. It does not really exhibit the derivation of the axioms in a process of experience. It asserts indeed that such a derivation occurred. But it assigns to it a date in a so remotely prehistoric and prelogical age that it is impossible to observe the details of the process. And in any case the process is complete. Thus, according to Mill, the romance of the axioms is past before real thinking and scientific induction begin: association has engendered them, but that does not prevent them from being final constituents of the present intellectual order; once established "in the dim red dawn of man," they are exempt from further vicissitudes, and undergo no selection or real confirmation in the development of our intelligence. Thus they lay claim to the same vicious finality as their rivals the *a priori* structures of the mind: neither the one nor the other leaves room for a real growth in the intrinsic powers of the mind.

III

§ 10. But to castigate empiricism is to flog a dead horse; to go on an expedition against apriorism is to plunge into an enchanted forest in which it is easy to miss the truth by reason of the multitude of "universal and necessary truths" which bar one's way.

At first, indeed, nothing seems easier and more obvious than the considerations upon which apriorism is based. If there are certain truths which are necessary to all knowing, which are implied in the existence of every act of knowledge, if these truths cannot be derived from experience because they are presupposed by all experience, if, as we said, we must be in possession of them before experience can confirm them, then what can we do but call them *a priori* and suppose that they reveal the ultimate self-evident structure of the mind, which we must recognise, but which it would argue impiety to question and fatuity to derive?

Nevertheless I propose to show that beneath the thin crust of this self-evidence there lie concealed unsuspected depths of iniquity, that the clearness of the doctrine is superficial and gives way to deepening obscurity the farther it is explored, that in every one of the specious and familiar phrases, which apriorists are wont to fling about as the final deliverances of epistemological wisdom, there lurk indescribable monsters of ambiguity. Nay, my criticism will culminate in a demonstration that the whole conception of an independent and autonomous theory of knowledge is afflicted with an ineradicable and incurable confusion of thought, the clearing up of which demolishes the *locus standi* of the whole apriorist position.

Let us note then in the first place that as an inference from the break-down of the old empiricism apriorism is devoid of cogency. It does not follow that because the 'necessary' truths are presupposed in all experience they are, in the technical sense, *a priori*. We must indeed be possessed of them to organise our experience, but we

need *not* be possessed of them in the manner asserted. It suffices that we should hold them *experimentally*, as principles which we *need practically* and would like to be true, to which therefore we propose to give a trial, without our adoring them as ultimate and underivable facts of our mental structure. In other words they may be prior to experience as *postulates*.[1]

§ 11. Similarly the method of postulates is capable of supplying an alternative explanation of what, since Kant, have been esteemed two infallible marks of a genuine *a priori* truth, viz. its universality and necessity. It is not enough merely to contend that these truths cannot come from experience, because experience can only give fact and not necessity (or at least not an objective necessity), and because it can never guarantee an absolute universality which applies to the future as well as to the present and past. For a postulate possesses both these valuable characteristics by as good a right as an *a priori* truth, and is not afflicted with the impotence that besets a mere record of past experience.

Its universality follows from its very nature as a postulate. If we make a demand that a certain principle shall hold, we naturally extend our demand to all cases without distinction of time, past, present, and to come. The shrinking modesty which clings to the support of precedent is out of place in a postulate. A truth which we assume because we want it may as well be assumed as often as we want it and for all cases in which it may be needed. We can make it therefore as universal as we please, and usually we have no motive for not making it absolutely universal.[2] Nor is the enormity

[1] To meet the obvious criticism that most people are quite unaware that they postulate in knowing, it may be well to add that the postulating, like the 'experimenting,' may proceed with little or no consciousness of its nature. Indeed this is precisely the reason why the voluntarist and postulatory character of mental life has been so little recognised, and its assertion still appears such a novelty in philosophy. The philosophers who indignantly reject it argue that they are not aware of postulating, and *ergo* there is no such thing. But this is a mere *ignoratio elenchi*, and does not prove that they are not deluded.

[2] Sometimes, it is true, a principle which is assumed as useful for one purpose turns out later on to conflict with another. The scientific postulate of determinism and its relations to the ethical postulate of freedom are a good example. In such cases there is a temptation to deny the absolute universality

of a postulate lessened, or atoned for, by self-denying economy in the use of it. A postulate is none the less a postulate because it is a little one, and if in making it we sin, we may as well sin boldly.[1]

Similarly the 'necessity' of a postulate is simply an indication of our *need*. We want it and so *must* have it, as a means to our ends. Thus its necessity is that of intelligent purposive volition, not of psychical (and still less of physical) mechanism.[2] The inability to think

of one or both of the conflicting principles. But the better way of obviating the conflict is to emphasise the fact that each principle is relative to the purpose for which it was assumed, and that consequently, on their respective planes and from their several points of view, both principles may be universally valid, though one or the other, or both, must eventually be subjected to reinterpretation.

[1] It is a great satisfaction to me to find myself on this point in complete agreement with Dr. Hodder (*The Adversaries of the Sceptic*, p. 14) whose merciless castigation of the half-hearted postulatings of some modern logicians, can, to my mind, be met only by an open avowal of the fundamental part played by postulation in the constitution of all knowledge (including Dr. Hodder's scepticism).

[2] I am of course painfully aware that the term *necessity* is exceedingly equivocal. At first sight it seems as though we could distinguish—

1. 'Absolute' and intrinsic necessity *sui* (*et optimi*) *juris* (Aristotle's *ἀναγκαῖον ἁπλῶς καὶ πρώτως*), of which the 'necessity' of *a priori* truths is commonly reputed to be an illustrious example.

2. The conditional necessity of a logical train of thought, in which the conclusion follows 'necessarily' from its premisses.

3. The necessity of the 'necessary conditions' under which all actions take place. This influence of the given material is Aristotle's *οὗ οὐκ ἄνευ*.

4. The necessity of means to ends (Aristotle's *ὧν οὐκ ἄνευ τὸ ἀγαθόν*), which renders the 'necessary' ultimately the 'needful.'

5. The psychical feeling of 'having to' or 'compulsion' (Aristotle's *ἀναγκαῖον βίᾳ*).

But in reality the last two alone of these senses are primary and descriptive of ultimate facts about our mental constitution, from which the others may be derived. The feeling of necessity (No. 5) may be evoked by a variety of circumstances, by physical constraint, by attempts to deny facts of perception, or to interrupt a train of thought which coheres, either logically, or psychologically (for all minds, or for an individual's mind). It arises wherever a volition is thwarted, and not until this occurs; hence the necessity alike of fact and of reasoning appears to be 'implicit.' The truth, however, is that factual data and logical reasonings are *not* 'necessary' in themselves; their 'necessity' is only aroused in consciousness when the will needs to affirm them against resistance in the pursuit of its ends. That '2 and 2 *must be* 4' only marks the rejection of some other result: *if* we desire to adhere to our system of arithmetical assumptions and are determined to go on counting, we cannot be called upon to add 2 and 2 in any other way. But behind the '*can't*' there always lurks a '*won't*': the mind cannot stultify itself, because it will not renounce the conceptions it needs to order its experiences. The feeling of necessity, therefore, is at bottom an emotional accompaniment of the purposive search for the means to realise our ends (sense 4). And inasmuch as the pursuit of means is unmeaning except in beings working under limitations in their choice of means, which means are themselves extracted from the resisting material (*ὕλη*), the 'necessity' of the material conditions (sense 3) comes to be bound up with and included under this (4th) head.

As for 'absolute necessity' (sense 1) it is altogether a misnomer, involving a

them otherwise, which is supposed to distinguish necessary truths, is at bottom a *refusal* to do so, a refusal to strip oneself of useful means of harmonising one's experience at the summons of a casual doubt. To argue, then, from the universality and necessity of our axioms to their *a priori* origin is a *non sequitur* which should not be allowed to pass unchallenged, even if there were no alternative theory in the field.

§ 12. Let us consider next the possible meanings of the phrase 'a condition of all possible experience.' When an *a priori* truth is so denominated, what is the precise meaning attached to 'condition'? Does it mean that without which experience cannot *be*, or cannot *be thought*, or cannot be thought *in an æsthetically pleasing or ethically satisfactory manner?* Evidently we ought to distinguish between a truth which is operative as a psychical antecedent fact *causing* the subsequent experience and a logical factor which is detected in that experience by subsequent reflection, but need not be actually present in consciousness at the time of experiencing, and so cannot be called a psychical fact. In the latter case the 'condition of the possibility of experience' is not anything actually necessary to the experience, but rather necessary to its *ex post facto* reconstruction which ministers to our desire for the logical ideal of an intelligible system of experience.

And of course the answer to the question—what are the conditions of thinking such a logical system?—will depend on the mode of logical analysis we may choose to adopt: hence the burden of proof will rest with the advocates of any particular form of apriorism that their account is the *only one* possible.

All these considerations may be urged with still

contradiction *in adjectis:* necessity is always dependence, and the factual only becomes 'necessary' by having a ground assigned to it, *i.e.* by sacrificing its independence and becoming hypothetical. But the hypothetical necessity of thought (sense 2), into which it is thus absorbed, is itself reducible to a means: Our coherent systems of 'necessary connection' can (and will) be shown to be but means for the realisation of our purposes in thinking, and apart from these possess no necessity. No one need add 2 and 2 as 4 unless he needs to add, *i.e.* *wills* to add them, because he *needs* arithmetic.

greater force against versions of the *a priori* conditions of experience which reduce themselves to demands (it is true for the most part semi-conscious and unavowed) that the cosmos shall conform to various æsthetical and ethical ideals: such demands may be entirely legitimate in their way, and I myself would be the last to think the worse of any philosopher for showing susceptibility to ethical and æsthetical ideals, and holding that their realisation also is included in the conditions of a thoroughly rational experience. But should they not be avowed as such? and is it not entirely improper to mask them under the ambiguity of 'the conditions of experience'? There remains then only the first interpretation, which takes the 'condition' to be an actual psychical fact, and so decides in one way the very debatable question which must next engage our attention.

§ 13. What does *a priori* mean? When we speak of 'the *a priori* principles implied in the existence of all knowledge,' do we mean implied *logically* or *psychologically?* Are they, that is, the products of a *logical analysis* or *psychical facts?* Is the 'priority' asserted priority *in time* (psychical fact) or priority *in idea* (logical order)? Or, *horribile dictu*, can it be that the *a priori*, as it is used, is a little of both, or each in turn, and that the whole apriorist account of our axioms rests on this fundamental confusion?

Of course it would be very pleasant if we could answer this question by an appeal to authority, if we could find, for choice in Kant, or, if not, in some of his followers and interpreters, an unambiguous and authoritative settlement of this question. But unfortunately Kant's own utterances are so obscure, ambiguous, and inconsistent, and his followers are in such disagreement, that this short and easy way is barred, and that we shall have to adopt the longer, and perhaps more salutary, method of arguing out the logical possibilities of each interpretation.

§ 14. I shall, accordingly, begin by considering the interpretation of the *a priori* as a term in a logical

analysis, as it seems on the whole to be that best supported and most supportable.

If we take the *a priori* as the outcome of a logical inquiry, as the product of a logical analysis describing how the formation of knowledge out of its constituent factors is to be conceived, if the world is to be thinkable (*i.e.* to satisfy our logical ideals), then the first point of which we shall require an explanation is *how we come by* these factors. In the Kantian analysis knowledge is said to arise out of the union of heterogeneous elements, Sensation and Thought, the former supplying the Matter, the latter the Form. But what authenticates Kant's fundamental antithesis of Matter and Form, Sensation and Thought, so that it should be imperative on every one to set out from it in his analysis of the nature of knowledge? Why are we not to be at liberty to conduct our analysis in whatever way and by whatever principles appear to us most suitable? Why should we be tied down to Kant's factors? Has not Mr. Shadworth Hodgson recently shown that it is possible to construct a logical analysis of knowledge as elaborate and careful as Kant's (though perhaps just as unsound ultimately) without having recourse to a use of *a priori* principles? Or better still, should we not do well to go back to Aristotle and find in his antithesis of mediate and immediate, discursive and intuitive, the basis of an analysis quite as legitimate in theory and far more fertile in practice? Is it not in short an unavoidable methodological defect of any 'epistemological' argument that it must rest on an *arbitrary selection* of fundamental assumptions?

So far as I can see, the *exclusive* claims of the Kantian analysis could be defended only in two ways. It might be alleged that the recognition of its truth was itself an *a priori* necessity of thought. Or it might be contended that its correctness was guaranteed by the manner of its working, by our finding that, as a matter of subsequent experience, it *did* enable us to account rationally for all the observed characteristics of our knowledge.

But would not the first defence be exposed to the crushing retort that it begged the question, and was nothing more than a circular argument which tried to make the unsupported allegation of a necessity of thought into the logical ground of that allegation?

The second defence on the other hand seems obnoxious to a double objection. In the first place has it not a pronounced empiricist trend, and is it consonant with the dignity of apriorism to introduce a sort of transcendental 'payment by results' into the estimation of theoretical philosophemes? And secondly, if we answer thus, it will be necessary, but not easy, to show that *de facto* the Kantian epistemology gives a complete and satisfactory answer to the whole problem. And I hardly anticipate that the distinguished philosophers who have devoted their lives to proving the necessity of going beyond Kant to Fichte, or Hegel, or Herbart, or Schopenhauer, because of the glaring defects they have found in Kant's system, will find it to their taste so to defend the Kantian position, even though it has supplied them with the common foundation of their several systems. We must either deny, therefore, that the truth of the Kantian analysis of knowledge is vouched for by its self-evident adequacy, by the pellucid cogency of its constructions, or assert that the whole procession of philosophers that has started from Kant has gone hopelessly astray.

But after all it is not we who are concerned to find our way past the uninviting horns of this dilemma; whether the Kantian analysis of knowledge is perfect and his followers have erred in amending it, or whether it is fundamentally wrong and his followers have erred in continuing it, the point which has now aroused our curiosity is what guarantees it offers for the correctness of its presuppositions. Let us turn, therefore, to the history of philosophy and inquire whence as a matter of fact Kant derived the presuppositions of his analysis.

§ 15. I greatly fear the answer will be shocking. Kant's whole construction seems to be based on psychology,

nay on the psychology of the period! How can this be reconciled with the assiduity with which the dominant school of Kant-Pharisees has preached that epistemology and psychology have nothing to do with each other and that the former must be kept quite clear from contamination with the latter? After it has been so long and laboriously instilled into us that subservience to psychology is the one deadly sin which the good epistemologist must shun, that psychology is the wicked realm of Hume, Mill, and the Devil, have we not a right to be shocked when we find that Kant himself has distilled his *elixir vitæ* from this broth of Hell? Is it not intolerable then to force us to employ psychological assumptions as to the nature of mind? For even though it is permitted to receive instruction from a foe, we know that it is prudent to dread the Danaans even when they are bearing gifts.

And yet the facts are hard to argue away. Is not the antithesis between the 'matter' of sensation and the 'form' of thought the old psychological distinction invented by Plato? Again has it not often been shown[1] that in its conception of the 'manifold of sensation' the Kantian system presupposes all the figments of an empiricist psychology, and implies the very psychological atomism which the whole subsequent history of philosophy has shown to be unworkable, and which the simplest introspection shows to be untrue? And is it not in a large measure because he vainly and falsely follows, nay outdoes, Hume in assuming a wholly unformed and unfounded ὕλη of sensations, which not all the *a priori* machinery made in Germany can ever really lick into shape, that Kant's epistemology breaks down?

And what Kant adds to this psychological mixture of Platonic dualism and Humian atomism is a no less unoriginal ingredient. It consists simply of a number of faculties, invented *ad hoc*, upon which devolves the duty (which we are vainly assured they are capable of fulfilling) of organising the formless matter with which they are supplied. But does not this commit the Kantian theory

[1] Most recently and lucidly in Mr. Hobhouse's *Theory of Knowledge*, p. 42.

of knowledge to another psychological fallacy, the effete and futile doctrine of faculties? In fine what answer should we be able to make, nay how should we disguise our sympathy, if an *enfant terrible* should arise and declare that so far from being uncontaminated with psychology Kantian epistemology was in reality nothing but a misbegotten cross by faculty psychology out of Humian atomism?

I have never been able to discover from the apriorists what they conceive to be the relation of logical analysis to psychological fact, *i.e.* the actual process of experience, but if, as experience shows, some reference to the latter occurs, and is indeed inevitable, we may at least demand that the reference should be made clear and explicit. And in addition it may fairly be demanded that if a theory of knowledge cannot but rest on presuppositions as to the factual nature of conscious life, recourse should be had to psychological descriptions of the best and most modern type, before an attempt is made to decide what super- or extra-psychological principles are 'implied in the existence of knowledge.'

§ 16. It would seem then that the attempt to construe the *a priori* as a logical analysis independent of psychological fact is not practicable, and cannot really dispense with an appeal to psychological assumptions which are arbitrary and exploded. But the difficulties of this theory of the *a priori* by no means end here. Supposing even that somehow, aided, let us say, by some spiritual influx from a noümenal world, we had succeeded in constructing a complete account of the structure of knowledge which satisfied every logical requirement, worked perfectly, and was applicable to everything that could be called knowledge, even so we should have gained an æsthetical rather than logical advantage. Our epistemology would be beautiful, because great and symmetrical, but would it be indisputably true? Could we not conceive some other philosopher gifted with an equally synoptic imagination setting himself to compete with our lovely construction, and succeeding, perhaps, in throwing it into the shade of

oblivion by a rival structure based on different assumptions, built up by different connections and excelling its predecessors in completeness, simplicity, and æsthetic harmony?[1]

Theoretically at least *any number* of such analyses of knowledge would seem to be possible; for they have only to construct imaginary logical systems, to describe how knowledge *may be conceived* to be put together, without restriction as to the choice of principles assumed and without reference to what actually occurs *in rerum natura*. It would need therefore the decree of some absolute and infallible despot of the intelligible world to secure for whatever *a priori* account was preferred—on account of its simplicity or æsthetic completeness or practical convenience—a monopoly of epistemological explanation.

§ 17. However, even this may be conceded. I am in a yielding mood and not disposed to cavil or to stick at trifles, and so will not contest the right divine of Kant and his dynasty—he has too great a bodyguard of philosophy professors.

I proceed only to point out a consequence of the attempt to construe the *a priori* logically without reference to psychical fact. It follows that its priority is *not in time*. For the whole matter is one of logical analysis. The actual knowledge, which the epistemologist professes to analyse, is then the real fact, and prior to the analysis which professes to explain it. It is the actual presupposition of the analysis which distinguishes in it an *a priori* and an *a posteriori* element. Thus in actual fact the *a priori* and *a posteriori* elements in knowledge are co-eternal and co-indispensable, even though not esteemed co-equal. The priority therefore of the *a priori* is solely an honorific priority *in dignity*. *A priori* and *a posteriori* are merely eulogistic and dyslogistic appellations, which we are pleased to bestow upon factors which we are pleased to distinguish in one and the same act of knowledge. In the concrete reality they are fused together; there is no form without matter and no matter without

[1] That this actually occurs has been shown above (§ 14).

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form—*συνεζεῦχθαι μὲν γὰρ ταῦτα φαίνεται καὶ χωρισμὸν οὐ δέχεσθαι.*[1]

Now if this be the case, I cannot for the life of me see why such inordinate importance should be attached to the distinction of *a priori* and *a posteriori*, nay to the whole epistemological theory, nor why the naming and precedence of such abstractions should be accounted essentials of philosophic salvation. What now hinders us from inferring from the course of the argument that the procedure and terminology of our epistemological analysis is arbitrary and indifferent, and that the real test of truth comes, not from any distinctions we assume beforehand, but *a posteriori* and *empirically* from the manner of its working?

§ 18. As far as the Kantian analysis of knowledge is concerned, the issue can be narrowed down to this question, whether it works, and is the simplest and most convenient analysis that can be devised. If such a contention on its behalf can be substantiated, let it be called true, in the only sense in which mortal man can intelligibly speak of truth; if not, let it be finally housed in that 'Museum of Curios' which Prof. James has so delightfully instituted for the clumsy devices of an antiquated philosophy.[2]

Now this is a question which I could not presume to answer for others without a thorough knowledge of their tastes and customs of thought; but personally I have long felt towards the Kantian epistemology not much otherwise than Alphonso the Wise felt towards the Ptolemaic astronomy when he realised its growing complications; and if by incantations or recantations or decantations I could induce its author to leave the society and the *otium cum dignitate* of the Thing-in-itself, I would fain relieve my feelings by apostrophising him as follows:—

'Oh mighty Master of both Worlds and both Reasons, Thinker of Noümena, and Seer of Phenomena, Schematiser of Categories, Contemplator of the Pure Forms of Intuition,

[1] Aristotle, *Eth. Nich.* x. 4. 11.
[2] *Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results*, p. 24.

Unique Synthesiser of Apperceptions, Sustainer of all Antinomies, all-pulverising Annihilator of Theoretic Gods and Rational Psychologies, I conjure thee by these or by whatever other titles thou hast earned the undying gratitude of countless commentators, couldst thou not have constructed the theory of our thinking activity more lucidly and more simply?'

§ 19. At this point it would seem to be time for believers in the *a priori* to shift their ground and to try another version of its meaning. I expect to be told, and in no measured terms, that I have misinterpreted and maligned Kant, and blasphemed against the sacred image of immutable truth which he has set up. Epistemological analysis is not the arbitrary pastime of an idle imagination, *ἐνδεχόμενον ἄλλως ἔχειν* in myriad ways. *A priori* truths are facts which can neither be nor be conceived otherwise, and without which no other knowledge can be or be conceived.

"You will not surely," I shall indignantly be asked, "deny that you think by the principle of identity, that you predicate the categories of substance and causality, that you refer your experiences to a synthetic unity of apperception, that you behold them in space and time? And we call these operations *a priori*, to indicate that without them you cannot know or experience anything at all."

Very well, then, let us recognise the *a priori* truths as facts. If it is on this condition alone that I may use them, I will gladly grovel in the dust before them rather than that they should withdraw the light of their countenance and I should be cast into outer darkness. Still I cannot but hope that the said light is not so blinding that I cannot behold their *features*. Permit me, therefore, to trace them and to bask in their beauty.

The *a priori* axioms are facts—real, solid, observable, mental facts—and woe betide the philosopher that collides with them! In one word they are *psychical facts* of the most indubitable kind.

My delight at having found something tangible at

the bottom of so much obscure terminology is so sincere that I have not the heart to be critical about their psychological credentials. Let me waive, therefore, the question, mooted before, whether they have always been described with psychological accuracy, and by the best psychological formulas. I waive also the cognate question whether their description suffices to distinguish them unequivocally from their discredited ancestors, the innate ideas, which since Locke we have all been taught to deny with our lips. I will postpone also an obvious question as to what is now to prevent the theory of knowledge from being absorbed in psychology. For I have no wish to "sycophantise" against an argument which bids fair to become intelligible.

§ 20. But of course I cannot close my eyes to the consideration that observable psychical facts *have a history.* The *a priori* axioms, therefore, may be contemplated *historically*, and *psychogenetically;* and then, perhaps, the valet within me whispers, it will turn out that they were not always such superhuman heroines as they now appear, and that they have arrived at their present degree of serene exaltation from quite simple and lowly origins. Accordingly I shade my eyes, thus, and scrutinise their countenances, so, and lo! I begin to discriminate! They do not all seem to be of an age or of equal rank; some, as Plato says,[1] are *πρεσβείᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχουσαι.* Others seem to have been admitted into the Pantheon in historic times, while yet others have been thrown into the background, or even into Tartaros. Shade of Plato! is not even the supercelestial World of Ideas exempt from change? Nay more, their manners and bearing are not uniform, and I swear by Aphrodite, I believe some are rouged and powerless to hide the ravages of age!

To carry on the imagery would be too painful, but I must adhere to its meaning. If the *a priori* axioms are in any sense psychical facts, or contained in psychical facts, each of them has a theoretically traceable history,

[1] *Republic*, 509 B.

and in many cases that history is visibly written on their faces. They are complex growths which constitute *problems* for the philosophic mind; they are in no sense solutions of the problem of knowledge, or of any other.

Whoever then can carry their analysis farther, either historically, by showing how, when, and why they arose, or logically, by systematically connecting them with and deriving them from the other constituents of our nature, or by the mixed method to which the gaps in our knowledge will probably long compel us, *i.e.* by supplementing and colligating actual observation by hypothesis, will have deserved well of philosophy, even though he will have had to sacrifice the dogma of the verbal inspiration of the Kantian Criticism.

§ 21. Any such further inquiry into axioms, therefore, is necessarily preferable to any view which is content to leave them *plantées là* as insuperable, indissoluble, unquestionable, ultimate facts which obstruct the advance of science by their unintelligibleness. For what could be more disheartening than to encounter this serried array of *a priori* 'necessities of thought' entrenched behind craftily contrived obstructions of technical jargon, and declining to yield or to give any account of themselves?

Can we indeed, so long as we tolerate their pretensions, be truly said to have explained the nature of knowledge at all? For what do they do to explain it? What do they do beyond vainly duplicating, as *μάταια εἴδη*, the concrete processes of actual knowing? At best they seem nothing but the *capita mortua* of a defunct faculty psychology, which offers us only a tautological *δύναμις* in lieu of the *ἐνέργεια* whereof we desired an explanation.

I have experience of the spatially extended—forsooth, because I am endowed with a 'pure' faculty of space perception! I experience succession—forsooth, because I have the 'pure' form of empty time! I refer my experience to my 'self,' and the operation is 'explained' by being rebaptised in the name of the Synthetic Unity of Apperception!

I know of course that Kant supposed himself to have

guarded against this interpretation and the criticism which it provokes, by denying that the 'pure intuition' of Space or Time is *a priori* only in the sense in which, *e.g.* the colour sense is prior to the colour perception.[1] But I should dispute his right to do this, and contend that in so far as he succeeded in establishing a difference, it was only at the cost of making the 'pure intuition' prior to experience in the evil psychological sense of the 'innate idea.'[2]

§ 22. "But is not this whole indictment based on a refusal to recognise the axioms as ultimate? And what do you hope to gain thereby? For surely you do not mean to refuse to recognise anything as ultimate? And what more deserving objects could you find for such recognition than the body of necessary truths?"

Certainly I do not in the least mean to commit myself to a denial of anything ultimate. Every inquiry must stop, as it must begin, somewhere. Only I am disposed to deny that we should stop with the 'necessary truths.' And I urge that if by one method a fact (under investigation *in pari materia*, of course) appears ultimate, which by another is easily susceptible of further analysis, then the latter method is logically superior. And I contend also that the so-called *a priori* truths do not look ultimate, and that it is highly disadvantageous to treat them as such: I am preparing to contend that upon proper investigation they turn out to be certainly derivative, and that a knowledge of their ancestry will only increase the regard and affection we all feel for them.

It appears, then, that if *a priori* truth be taken as psychical fact, it is arbitrary to treat it as ultimate, and that we have every motive to connect it with the rest of our mental constitution. We have thereby completed the proof that the apriorist account of our axiomatic

[1] *Critique of Pure Reason*, § 3, *s.f.*

[2] Kant supports an erroneous doctrine by downright psychological blunders. Thus he asserts that he can 'think' empty Space and Time, but not objects out of Space and Time. If we resolve the ambiguity of 'think,' it will appear (*a*) that both the objects and the 'pure intuitions' are alike *conceivable*, and (*b*) that they are alike *unimaginable*. But Kant contrasts the unimaginableness of the objects with the conceivableness of the intuitions to make the latter seem 'prior.'

first principles is invalid, in whichever way it is consistently taken.

§ 23. But then it never is consistently taken. Neither in Kant nor in any of his successors is either interpretation of the *a priori* consistently adhered to. When objections are raised against the manifestly fictitious nature of its psychological foundations, all connection with psychology is indignantly disavowed. If, on the strength of this disavowal, the whole theory of knowledge is treated as a pretty structure which need comply only with logical canons of formal consistency, the actual reality and *de facto* use of the axioms is thrust down our throats.

And the worst of it is that this duplicity of attitude is unavoidable. For it is in truth essential to the whole epistemological point of view. There is no room for a separate theory of knowledge with a peculiar standpoint, if we assign to psychology and logic the whole field that each of them can and ought to occupy.[1] In the so-called theory of knowledge the primary problem is psychological; it is a question of the correctest and most convenient *description* of what actually occurs in acts of knowing, *i.e.* a question of psychological fact. To logic on the other hand it appertains to estimate the *value* of all these cognitive processes: all questions as to whether the judgments that claim truth actually attain it, as to how cognitions may be rendered consistent, may realise the purposes which we have in knowing, may contribute to the ideals we set before ourselves in knowing, fall into the province of the science which aims at systematising our cognitions into a coherent body of truth. Between these two what remains for epistemology to do? From what point of view, and with what purpose is it to treat knowledge, if both the facts and their valuation are already otherwise provided for? It is not a normative science like logic, and it is not descriptive science like psychology. And the 'critical' question—*how do we know?*—important though it is in itself, surely

[1] I do not of course maintain that either science does this at present. It is just because they are not clear as to the character and relations of their respective standpoints that they leave a sort of no man's land around their border line, for hybrids like epistemology to squat on.

does not suffice to found a science. For the question cannot be answered unless it is asked on the basis of definite facts and with a definite aim in view. And whenever it is answered, the answer will always be found to be in terms either of psychology or of logic.

§ 24. As the outcome of our criticism of the two current theories of the nature of our axioms we have arrived at the conclusion that neither the apriorist nor the empiricist account is tenable. Both have proved unsatisfactory; the former because it represented the axioms as mere brute facts of our mental organisation (either entirely disconnected or connected only among themselves), the latter as the fictitious imprints of a psychologically impossible experience on a purely passive mind.

At bottom the failure of both accounts springs from the same source. Both are infected with an intellectualism which is a libel on our nature, and leads them to take too narrow a view of its endowment. Because of this common intellectualism they fail to realise the central fact which we always encounter so soon as we abandon the abstract standpoints of the lower sciences and try to conceive our relation to our experience as a whole, the fact that the living organism *acts as a whole*. Or to bring out separately the aspects of this central fact which empiricism and apriorism severally misinterpret, we may say that *the organism is active and the organism is one*.

Empiricism, with its fiction of the *tabula rasa*, fails to appreciate the first aspect; to see that, even in its reactions on its environment, the organism is active, reacting in a mode decided by its own nature and guided by its aspirations towards a harmony of its experience. Its whole attitude is one of volition and desire, which is ultimately a yearning for the Apocalypse of some unearthly ideal of harmonious equilibration in its whole experience, and for the attainment of this end the whole intellectual apparatus is a means.[1]

[1] Of course this has not wholly escaped the notice of philosophers even in former days, and so we may remind ourselves of Spinoza's *conatus in suo esse perseverare*,

In short, the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of the old empiricism is to have failed to recognise this fact of living activity and its bearing on the growth and constitution of the mind.

Again the organism is *one* and reacts as a whole. This is what apriorism fails to appreciate. In the fierce struggle for existence we need all our forces, and require a compact control of all our resources to survive. The organism, therefore, cannot afford to support a disinterested and passionless intelligence within it, which hovers unconcerned above the bloodstained battlefields of progress, or even sucks a ghoulish and parasitic sustenance from the life-blood of practical striving. *Θεωρία* must not be separated from *πρᾶξις*, but related to it as means to end; thought must be conceived as an outgrowth of action, knowledge of life, intelligence of will, while the brain which has become an instrument of intellectual contemplation must be regarded as the subtlest, latest, and most potent organ for effecting adaptations to the needs of life.[1]

Thus the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of apriorism is to take our intelligence in abstraction from its biological and psychological setting, from its history, from its aim, and from the function which it performs in the economy of our nature. It perpetrates a *χωρισμός* between knowing and

of Schopenhauer's Will-to-live, nay of Herbart's account of sensations as self-maintenances of the soul. At the present day, voluntarism bids fair to prevail over intellectualism, having obtained the support of men like James, Wundt, Ward, Sigwart, Stout, Paulsen, Renouvier, etc. Since this was written the recently published remains of Nietzsche (*Wille zur Macht*, iii. 1. 1901) have made it manifest that he also conceived our axioms as postulates transformed into 'truths' by their usefulness, and that I might have quoted from him some telling phrases to this effect.

To all this even Mr. Bradley's reiterated asseverations (*Mind*, N.S., No. 41, pp. 7, 9, etc.) that he "cannot accept" principles which he sees to be subversive of the dogmatic assumptions of his whole philosophy hardly seem a sufficient counterpoise.

[1] Of course this doctrine does not involve a denial of the existence (though it does of the rationality) of a 'pure' or 'disinterested' love of knowledge 'for its own sake.' All our functions are liable to perversion and so as a psychological fact, there may also occur such a perversion of the cognitive instinct; nay, history would even seem to show that it may persist and even be strengthened in the course of evolution. But then the explanation probably is that 'useless' knowledge is not nearly so useless as its votaries suppose, and that in the minds which are capable of it the love for it is connected with other mental capacities which are both useful and valuable.

feeling which renders both impotent and their *de facto* union unintelligible.

But when we try to grasp experience as a whole, we must set ourselves above the encumbering abstractions of a psychological classification that has transgressed the limits of its validity. By conceiving the axioms as essentially postulates, made with an ultimately practical end, we bridge the gap that has been artificially constructed between the functions of our nature, and overcome the errors of intellectualism. We conceive the axioms as arising out of man's needs as an agent, as prompted by his desires, as affirmed by his will, in a word, as nourished and sustained by his emotional and volitional nature.[1] It is manifest that we thereby knit together the various factors in our nature in a far closer and more intimate union than had previously seemed possible. Our nature is one, and however we distinguish, we must not be beguiled into forgetting this, and substituting a part for the whole. And, correspondingly, we open out the prospect of a systematic unification of experience of a far completer and more satisfactory character than can be dreamt of by an intellectualist philosophy. For just as the unity to which we may (and indeed must) now aspire is no longer merely that of the frigid abstraction called the 'pure' intellect, but includes

[1] I am not here concerned with the intra-psychological questions as to the number and nature of the psychic 'elements,' as to whether special volitional or affective processes must be recognised in psychology. For the question cannot be answered until it has been settled what is to be the *purpose* of the psychological description. Like all conceptions, the meaning and validity of those of psychology are relative to the use to which they are put, and in the abstract they have only potential meaning. As Dr. Stout well puts it (p. 10), one "cannot be right or wrong without reference to some interest or purpose," and before bespeaking their readers' attention for the details of their classifications, psychologists should above all make it clear *what they propose to do with them.* Now I do not doubt that it is quite possible, and for certain purposes even convenient, to devise descriptions in purely intellectual terms, which entirely dispense with the conceptions of volition, of agency, and even of feeling. Only of course it must not be imagined that any such descriptions are final and sacrosanct. They are purely methodological, and their validity extends as far as their usefulness. And the question arises whether they can be used for a purpose like that which we have in view. If not, we are entitled to describe differently. For it cannot be too soon or too strongly emphasised that there is no intrinsic or absolute truth or falsehood about any of our assumptions, apart from the manner of their working.

and satisfies the will and emotions, so the corresponding unity of the cosmos will not be a purely intellectual formality (such as every world must possess *ex vi definitionis*), but a complete harmony of our whole experience.

§ 25. It is a curious fact that in passing from the *a priori* to the postulate we can appeal to the authority of the same Kant whose characteristic doctrine of an independent theory of knowledge we have been compelled to reject. For Kant, in accordance with his peculiar greatness, which his critics' very criticisms have ever recoiled to recognise, became partly and tardily aware of the fatal error of his intellectualism and of the impossibility of accommodating the whole of life on the basis prescribed by the *Critique of Pure Reason*. After constructing for the 'Pure Reason' a fearful and wonderful palace of varieties, full of dungeons for insoluble antinomies, dispossessed sciences and incarcerated ideals, haunted and pervaded by the sombre mystery of the Noümenon, he came upon the problem of practical life and found himself unable to organise the moral order similarly, *i.e.* without reference to the *demands* which we make upon experience.

Hence he was constrained to rationalise conduct by the assumption of ethical *postulates*, which boldly encroached and trespassed on the forbidden domain of the unknowable, and returned thence laden with rich spoil—God, Freedom, and Immortality.

This achievement is too often underrated, because it seems to have cost Kant so little—merely a decree for the creation of one more hardly-noticed addition to the lengthy list of faculties, yclept the Practical Reason, conjured into existence *ad hoc*, and apparently as obedient as the rest to her author's word.

But in reality the consequences of enunciating the principle of the postulate are far more momentous, and with a little reflection, it soon appears that Kant has evoked a force which he cannot curb or confine within the borders of his system. The immediate consequence

of admitting ethical postulates which outflank the 'critical' negations of the Pure Reason, is a conflict between the Pure Reason, which had denied the possibility of *knowing* the subjects of the Postulates, and the Practical Reason, which insists that we must practically *believe* and *act on* these tabooed dogmas. Kant essays indeed to delimitate an arbitrary and unscientific frontier between their domains, based upon psychologically untenable hairsplitting between knowledge and belief,[1] but the most indulgent reader cannot but feel that the dualism of the Pure and the Practical Reason is intolerable and their antagonism irreconcilable, while the dual character which this doctrine imposes upon Kant as both the Cerberus and Herakles of the Noümenal world is calculated to bring ridicule both upon him and upon his system.

In view of this fundamental incongruity between the organising principles of knowledge and action, one of two expedients had to be adopted. The first is that preferred by the main body of Kantians to whom the true and epochmaking Kant is the writer of the first Critique.[2] They regarded the Practical Reason as a bit of a joke and accounted for Kant's subsequent recantation of his 'critical' results either wittily like Heine,[3] or dully, like —but no! too many have written on the subject for me to mention names!

The faithful few who tried to balance themselves in the unstable equilibrium of Kant's actual position, who believed his assurances as to the supremacy of the Practical over the Theoretic Reason and its speculative impotence, were left in a sad perplexity. They accepted the dogma, without venturing to define it, and were

[1] How can one prevent one's knowledge and one's belief from affecting each other? If we think at all, either the knowledge will render impossible the practical belief, or a conviction will arise that a belief we constantly act on, which permeates our whole being and never fails us, *is true*. Personally indeed I should say that such was the origin and ratification of all truth. Conversely, a belief which is foredoomed to remain a mere belief soon ceases to be acted on, *i.e.* to be a belief in any real sense at all. The history of religions is full of deplorable examples.

[2] Or rather of its dominant doctrine.

[3] *Philosophie in Deutschland.*

troubled with an uneasy consciousness that it would not bear thinking out.

Even here, however, there was a notable exception. Fichte, with the enterprise and courage of youth, took the Practical Reason seriously in hand, and combining the doctrine of its supremacy with Kant's hints as to a common root of the two Reasons,[1] proceeded to posit the Self as an '*absolutes Sollen*,' whence were to be deduced both the Not-Self and the practical and theoretical activities. The whole construction of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, however, proceeds in a *τόπος ὑπερουράνιος* which is too high for my humbler and concreter purpose—I mention it merely as a partial anticipation of the second and sounder way of conceiving the relations of the Practical and the Theoretical Reason to which I now proceed.

It is impossible to acquiesce in Kant's compromise and to believe by the might of the Practical Reason in what the Theoretic Reason declares to be unknowable. For if the suprasensible and noumenal does not really exist, it is both futile and immoral to tell us to believe in it on moral grounds; the belief in it is an illusion, and will fail us in the hour of our direst need. If the belief in the postulates is to have any moral or other value, it must first of all be used to establish the reality of the objects in which we are bidden to believe. We cannot *act as if* the existence of God, freedom, and immortality were real, if at the same time we *know* that it is hopelessly inaccessible and indemonstrable. We must therefore choose; we must either trust the Theoretical or the Practical Reason (unless, indeed, we are to conclude with the sceptic that both alike are discredited by their conflict).

If we choose to abide by the former, the undeniable fact of the moral consciousness will not save the postulates of the Practical Reason from annihilation. It may postulate as it pleases, as pathetically or ridiculously as it likes, its desire shall not be granted to it, and it will

[1] *E.g.* in the introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*.

prove nothing. By postulating the inadmissible it merely discredits itself. To the plea that the moral life must live and feed upon the substance of unverifiable hopes, Science must ruthlessly reply "*je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*" If then the moral life demands freedom, and freedom be an impossibility, the moral life must inexorably be crushed; Kant is *der Alles-zermalmende*, as Heine thought, and nothing more.

If on the other hand the Practical Reason be really the higher, if it really has the right to postulate and ethical postulates are really valid, then we really stand committed to far more than Kant supposed. Postulation must be admitted to be capable of leading to knowledge, nay, perhaps even to amount to knowledge, and indeed the thought will readily occur that it lies at the very roots of knowledge. For of course postulation cannot be confined to ethics. The principle, if valid, must be generalised and applied all round to the organising principles of our life. The Theoretic Reason will in this case be rendered incapable of contesting the supremacy of the Practical Reason by being absorbed by it and shown to be derivative. Thus postulation is either not valid at all, or it is the foundation of the whole theoretic superstructure.

We stand committed, therefore, to the assertion that in the last resort it is our practical activity that gives the real clue to the nature of things, while the world as it appears to the Theoretic Reason is secondary—a view taken from an artificial, abstract and restricted standpoint, itself dictated by the Practical Reason and devised for the satisfaction of its ends.

But to carry through this programme the price must be paid. The *Critique of Pure Reason* must be not merely revised, but re-written. It must be re-written in the light of the principle of the Postulate. Or as Prof. Ward has excellently put it, Kant's three *Critiques* must be combined into one.[1] The simplest thing of all, however, is to proceed independently to show in what

[1] *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 133. The whole passage is admirable.

manner our fundamental axioms are postulated, now that we may be held to have exhibited the necessity of the principle and its historical justification.[1]

IV

§ 26. We have already incidentally discovered some of the chief characteristics of the Postulate, such as its universality and necessity (§ 11), its experimental character (§§ 5, 8, 11), its psychological origin from practical needs, its function in holding together the intellectual and practical sides of our nature and developing the former out of the latter (§§ 24, 25). But it will not be amiss to consider some further points of a general character before proceeding actually to trace the development of specimen postulates into axioms.

The first point which perhaps will bear further emphasis is that mere postulating is not in general enough to constitute an axiom. The postulation is the expression of the motive forces which impel us towards a certain assumption, an outcome of every organism's unceasing struggle to transmute its experience into harmonious and acceptable forms. The organism cannot help postulating, because it cannot help trying (§ 5), because it must act or die, and because from the first it *will* not acquiesce in less than a complete harmony of its experience. It therefore needs assumptions it can act on and live by, which will serve as means to the attainment of its ends. These assumptions it obtains by postulating them in the hope that they may prove tenable, and the axioms are thus the outcome of a Will-to-believe which has had its way, which has dared to postulate, and, as William James has so superbly shown, has been rewarded for its audacity by finding that the world granted what was demanded.[2]

[1] For its relation to Aristotelianism, cf. the art. on 'Useless Knowledge' in *Mind*, N.S., No. 42.

[2] Practical postulation is the real meaning of his much misconstrued doctrine of the 'Will to believe.' It is not so much exhortation concerning what we *ought to do* in the future as analysis of what we *have done* in the past. And the critics of the doctrine have mostly ignored the essential addition to the 'will to believe,' viz. '*at your risk*,' which leaves ample scope for the testing of the assumed belief by experience of its practical results.

But the world does not always grant our demands. The course of postulation does not always run smooth. We cannot tell beforehand whether, and to what extent, a postulate can be made to work. Compliance with some of our demands is only extorted from the refractory material of our 'world,' by much effort and ingenuity and repeated trial. In other cases the confirmation we seek for remains incomplete, and the usefulness of the postulate is proportionately restricted. Sometimes again we may even be forced to desist from a postulate which proves unworkable.

It follows that we may find postulates (or attempts at such) in every stage of development. They may rise from the crudest cravings of individual caprice to universal desires of human emotion; they may stop short at moral, æsthetic, and religious postulates, whose validity seems restricted to certain attitudes of mind, or aspects of experience, or they may make their appeal to all intelligence as such; their use as principles of the various sciences may be felt to be methodological, or they may have attained to a position so unquestioned, useful, and indispensable, in a word so *axiomatic*, that the thought of their being conceived otherwise never enters our heads.

But even the most exalted of these *ἀρχαὶ ἀναπόδεικτοι τῶν μὴ ἐνδεχομένων ἄλλως ἔχειν* differ from their humble relatives in human wishes not in the mode of their genesis, but in their antiquity, in the scope of their usefulness, in the amount and character of the confirmation which they have received in the course of experience, in a word, in their *working* and not in their *origin*. They are the successful survivors in the process of sifting or 'selection' which has power also over the products of our intellectual striving.

But it ill becomes them on this account to give themselves airs and to regard their position as immutable and unassailable. For in many cases they retain their hold over our affections only *faute de mieux*. They are the best assumptions we can work with, but not the best we can conceive. And some one may some day discover a

way to work with what are now unsupported postulates, and so raise them to axiomatic rank. Thus whatever axioms we may at any time employ are, and ever remain relative to the nature of our desires and our experience, and so long as changes may occur in either, inexhaustible possibilities of corresponding developments must be admitted in the list of our axiomatic principles. An emotional postulate may become the guiding principle of a new science, a methodological principle may become superfluous and be discarded or be superseded by a better, a primitive desire may die down and cease to nourish a postulate, nay even a full blown axiom may be conceived as becoming otiose under changed conditions of experience.

While our empiricism is thus too radical, and our trust in experience too honest, to permit our theory to assign to any axiom an absolutely indefeasible status, we must yet admit that practically the possibility of modifying them is one that may safely be neglected. The great axioms or postulates are so ineradicably intertwined with the roots of our being, have so intimately permeated every nook and cranny of our *Weltanschauung*, have become so ingrained in all our habits of thought, that we may practically rely on them to stand fast so long as human thought endures. For apart from the fact that it would be gratuitous to suppose a revolution in our experience sufficient to upset them, they are protected by our laziness. To think always costs an effort, and the effort of thought required to undo the structure of mind which has grown up with the ages would be so gigantic that we should shrink with a shudder from the very thought thereof. And all for the sake of what? Merely to show that the mental order was constructed bit by bit by postulation and might be constructed otherwise! And would it not be sheer insanity to upset the authority of the axioms in use unless we were prepared to substitute others of superior value? There is therefore in general little prospect of revolutionary plots against the validity of axioms. The enterprise would too much resemble an attempt by a coral

polyp to cut itself adrift from its reef and to start *de novo*. So we do as the corals do and build on the corpses of our ancestors, hoping that if they were right we also shall profit by following suit, that if they were wrong, the consciousness of our wrongness will at least be borne in upon us with a less painful promptitude than if we had set out to go wrong on our own account.

§ 27. It follows as a matter of course, and will readily be comprehended, that, if our axioms have the origin alleged, if postulation pervades our whole mental life and forms the *nisus formativus* of mental development, no exhaustive, or even systematic, table of axioms can, or need, be drawn up. In principle their number and nature must depend on our experience and psychical temperament. They will radiate from human personality as their centre, and their common service in ministering to its needs will bestow upon them sufficient unity to debar us from attempts to force them into artificial systems which at best can result only in sham 'deductions' of the rational necessity of the actual, while making no provision for the possibilities of future development.

We may therefore absolve ourselves from the supposed duty of giving a 'deduction of the categories,' or even an exhaustive list of axioms and postulates. This is the more fortunate as it justifies us in considering only such select specimens of the growth of postulates and their development into axioms, as may suffice to illustrate the principle, or prove particularly interesting, and enables us to save much time and spare much weariness.

V

§ 28. Which of our fundamental axioms I select therefore, does not matter much, any more than the order in which they are treated; but as I am anxious not to incur the charge of shirking difficulties, I shall begin with tracing the genesis of one which is perhaps the most difficult, as it is certainly one of the most

fundamental and axiomatic—viz. the basis of all thinking in the strict sense of the term, the Principle of Identity.

Not, of course, that I propose to derive it out of nothing. I must entirely disavow the Hegelian (or hyper-Hegelian?) ambition of conjuring all Being into existence out of Not-being by a Dialectical Process working *in vacuo*; I have not even got the whole of concrete reality up my sleeve to insinuate bits thereof into my conclusions, whenever and wherever my reader's attention has been relaxed by some tortuous obscurity of argumentation. I prefer honestly to start from what may be taken to be, so far as psychology can describe it, matter of psychical fact. For I hold that epistemological speculation like every other, must take something factual for granted, if it is not to be vain imagining, and defy those who contest my presuppositions to state the alternatives they are in a position to offer. If on this account a claim be advanced that my initial basis of psychical fact is *a priori*, that is, prior to the axiom to be derived, I make no objection. I am content that it should be called so, if the phrase comforts anybody, and if I am permitted to point out (1) that such priority is only relative, *pro hac vice*, and for the purposes of the present inquiry, (2) it is admitted to lie below the level of what can properly be called thought. For I wish to make it quite plain that the psychical fact from which I propose to start, is on what I may perhaps best call the *sentient level of consciousness*, *i.e.* involves only a consciousness which feels pleasure and pain, which strives and desires without as yet clear self-consciousness or *conception* of objects.

In so doing, I assume, of course, the existence of consciousness or sentiency as a *datum*, and abstain from the alluring expedient of conducting my whole plea on the more concrete plane of biological discussion, obvious and seductive as it might appear to start thence and to argue (1) that the genesis—by a so-called 'accidental variation'—of the concomitance of psychical with physical process was of great survival-value to the lump of matter which first happened to find itself alive and

dimly conscious; (2) that subsequently great advantages accrued to organisms in which these mental processes cohered and coalesced and became continuous and centralised, until they culminated in self-consciousness. There is a fatal facility and engaging modernity about arguments of this sort, and they bring out an important aspect of the truth. For it is not too much to say, that every step in the development of our axioms, including even the steps hypothetically conceived to precede consciousness, could be plausibly formulated in terms of survival-value. But though it might be easy in this way to enlist the support of the biologically-minded, I prefer to conduct the argument on a higher and more philosophic plane, in order to avoid even the appearance of the *ὕστερον πρότερον* which is inevitably involved in every derivation of consciousness.

In assuming consciousness, moreover, we are bound to assume also the characteristic features whereby it is psychologically described, *e.g.* its continuity, coherence, conativeness, and purposiveness. It should be observed further that in pointing out these characteristics of consciousness, we are not attempting to *define* consciousness. For why should we court failure by propounding an inevitably inadequate formula, to contain and constrain that which embraces all existence, generates all formulas, uses them and casts them aside in its victorious development? Whoever is possessed of consciousness himself will recognise to what in him the description of consciousness refers; unless he were capable of this, the most exhaustive definitions would impinge on him in vain and without conveying a glimmer of meaning. That consciousness is a psychic fact therefore I shall assume; what it is, I must leave to my reader's own consciousness to inform him. I have then in consciousness a *πού στῶ* of psychic fact beyond which we neither can nor need go.

Nor I think need we allow the objection to perturb us that our present conception of consciousness may be miserably inadequate. In view of its continuing develop-

ment in the course of experience the suggestion is probably true; but we do not need the adequate conception of consciousness, which could be reached only in the seventh heaven, and there might have become superfluous. And in any case our ignorance of what the ulterior development of consciousness may portend, is no reason for refusing to recognise in it the actual features which are relevant to our purpose.

§ 29. Now among the factual features *implicit* in all consciousness, though perhaps hard to distinguish in its lower forms and not as yet completely *expressed* in any that we have so far reached, is an *identical self*—or what we are subsequently able so to designate. By this I do not of course mean anything lofty and metaphysical, but merely a convenient description of certain psychical facts. I have no quarrel with the psychologists who argue against an antiquated view of futile and unknowable soul-substance, and insist that the only self they can recognise is just the implicit 'owning' of all conscious processes. If the coherence and continuity of conscious processes can under the proper conditions develop into explicit self-consciousness, that is enough; and so long as the psychologists are able and eager to tell us all about the psychogenesis of the self, I see no reason why their accounts should not be referred to with gratitude and respect.

But my problem is not one of origin, but of the origin of validity; *i.e.* assuming this conscious self to have been developed, I have to trace out how it proceeds to the conception and postulation of identity. The felt self-identity of consciousness, which, however it arises, is a psychical fact, is, I contend, the ultimate psychical basis for raising the great postulate of logical identity, which is the first and greatest of the principles of discursive thought and introduces order into the chaos of presentations and analyses the *συγκεχυμένον* of primitive experience.

Now this achievement is not a 'necessity of pure thought' so much as of practical life; and without postulation it would remain impossible. The unceasing flow of

like impressions by itself would not suggest the recurrence of what has preserved its identity in change; nor would even its *felt* likenesses suffice to engender a perception of identity.[1] To obtain identity we must first desire it and demand it; and this demand, though it would be impossible if we did not feel ourselves to be identical selves and fruitless if we could not discover such around us, is a distinct step beyond anything given in passive experiencing.

Thus the conception of identity is a free creation of a postulating intelligence which goes beyond its experience to demand the satisfaction of its desires. But it must have been the felt sameness of the continuous conscious life that suggested the clue to the *recognition of the same* in the *recurrence of the like*.

§ 30. Edwin meets Angelina in her winter furs whom he admired last summer in fig leaves; he recognises her identity in the differences of her primitive attire. That such things as the persistence of identity through change should be, and what they mean, he could learn only from the immediate experience of his own identity. That they are *is his postulate*, a postulate that fills his heart with the delicious hope that Angelina will smile on him as bewitchingly as before. Why should I introduce sordidness into this romance, by dwelling also on the coarsely practical advantages of recognising objects in one's surroundings?

Yet it is surely plain that the recognition of the same amid variety of circumstance is advantageous; and if desiring it to be true, because he felt his whole happiness depended on it, Edwin made bold to postulate it, he well deserved the rich rewards which poured in as an overwhelming experience of its working confirmed his postulate.

[1] It seems to me clear that *psychologically* perception of likeness is ultimate, anterior to identity, and incapable of being reduced to it. The analysis of likeness into 'partial identity' is a *logical* procedure which occurs when we manipulate the psychical fact with a logical purpose and try to *conceive* the likeness. But then conception is admittedly a matter of thought, and thought rests on the principle of identity. What the tautology of the Hegelian definition ('identity is *identity* in difference') is struggling to express (or conceal?) is really the *use* of logical conception in manipulating the felt likenesses. Cf. the discussion in *Mind* between Prof. James and Mr. Bradley (N.S., Nos. 5-8).

We, of course are far removed from the scene of this primitive idyll, and have long since ceased to notice what a postulate identity was, and for the matter of that still is. We need a world of philosophic quibbling to bring before our eyes the fact that strict identity never yet was found by land or sea, but is always and everywhere a construction of our mind, *made* by voluntary concentration on the essential and rejection of the irrelevant.[1]

Nor, of course, did Edwin know this. He had postulated under the impulsion of practical need, without knowing what he did. The enormity of the logical consequences of his act was hidden from him and only gradually revealed. Still less did Angelina know that she had become the mate of the first *animal rationale*.

Edwin, again, could not foresee that his original postulate would not suffice, and that stupendous efforts of abstraction were still before him if he would complete the postulate of identity and attain to the purity of its present logical use.

In recognising Angelina he had of course (although he realised it not) construed her identity upon the model of his own. But the concrete given identity of self-consciousness is a slender basis for the construction of the logical ideal; indeed it even proves unequal to the requirements of a social life, and needs on this account to be sublimated and idealised into a concept that transcends the given.

The concretely identical, alas, changes in the flow of differences! Edwin has grown bald and Angelina wrinkled, and I grieve to say, they often quarrel. They are no longer what they were when each succumbed to the other's charms, and identity seems dubious and a fraud. *Eheu fugaces Postume! Postulate!* The cure is a hair of the dog that bit you. Edwin must postulate once more, must postulate a more permanent self which rises superior to such mischances of a mortal life, and,

[1] If identity were ever *found*, Dr. Hodder's amusing strictures (*Adversaries of the Sceptic*, pp. 116-117) on Mr. Bradley's "identity of indiscernibles" would be fatal to every use of the principle.

ever at its best, feeds on ambrosia and drains the nectared cups with changeless gods!

Gods, did I escape my own notice saying? What are gods and how do they arise? As men, but greater! Projections of ideals which the actual suggests, but seems to trample under foot! The sign-posts clearly point to the religious postulates and a track which here diverges from our own.

§ 31. For though it would be fascinating to trace the course of postulation to which religious conceptions owe their birth, we must follow the dry and dusty road of logical postulation by whose side the hardiest flowers of the boldest rhetoric can scarce contrive to blossom. A constant and unchanging self is needed not merely to satisfy what subsequently develops into the religious instinct, but also in order to yield a trustworthy standard of comparison for the purposes of everyday life. If Edwin likes his mammoth steak well done to-day and underdone to-morrow, no woman can live with him. A stable standard of reference in our judgments is an urgent practical need. Hence the ideal of absolute identity begins to dawn upon the logical horizon, and it is recognised that the possibility of meaning depends on its constancy, and that perfect constancy could be realised only by perfect knowledge.

And, not otherwise, recognition leads on to cognition, and cognition to the same postulate of conceptual identity or constancy. The process which took the recurrence of a similar presentation to mean that of the same individual, will bear extension to the resemblances of natural kinds. From recognising individuals we proceed to recognise species, a task made easier by the psychological carelessness which overlooks individual differences.[1] Now *every step in this process is a training in abstraction.* At first even Edwin could not recognise his Angelina without divesting her (in thought) of her enveloping differences.

[1] It is conceivable, indeed, that this process actually preceded in practical urgency, and therefore, in time, the recognition of individuality. But that would not impair the argument, for under some conditions the discrimination of individuals is unnecessary and all individuals are *practically the same.*

But by the time he can discern in their manifold disguises the surrounding objects that are useful or dangerous, he has a pretty sound working control of that weapon of analysis which we now call the principle of identity.

No doubt it still is, and long remains, an *ἔννυλον εἶδος* —pure logic not becoming needful so soon as pure mathematics—but sooner or later some one was sure to ask what was this universal 'man' which was so glibly predicated of white, black, yellow, and brown. And then of course the *ὕλη* would be in the fire, and a bloodless ballet of philosophers would commence to dance round the unearthly conflagration.

§ 32. I forgot to mention, by the way, that soon after recognising identity in Angelina, Edwin had (of course) invented language. As to why the expression of his emotions on that prehistoric occasion resulted in the euphonious sound of "Angelina," he can indeed state nothing intelligible. But by association's artful aid he got into the habit of venting this utterance whenever he saw her. And then one morning he not only said it, but meant it! Prodigious! the sound had become a symbol! It puzzled him very much, and he had that, until then, unheard-of thing, a nervous headache, for three days afterwards, which puzzled him still more. He put it down to dæmonic inspiration (a notable advance in theology!) and *went on thinking*. Then he proceeded to instruct Angelina, and after a painful process (to her!) got her to answer to her name. And, behold, when their children were born they all learned to talk, *i.e.* to apply similar and *identifiable* sounds to an indefinite plurality of similar objects. Which, of course, in those days was an immense advantage. And ever since the children of men have been the only anthropoids that could talk and impart ideas—whether they had them or not!

All this happened such a very long time ago that I cannot exactly tell you when, and have had (like Plato) to make a myth of it. Whether in so doing I have not condensed into a single myth what was really the gradual achievement of many generations of mortals it were

pedantic to inquire. The illustration serves, I hope, to bring out the main point, viz. that the affirmation of identity, without which there is neither thought nor judgment, is essentially an act of postulation (more *or less* consciously felt to be such) which presupposes as its psychological *conditio sine qua non* the feeling of the self-identity and 'unity' of consciousness.

§ 33. The derivation of identity I have sketched also goes some way, I think, to explain why in real life men so long enjoyed immunity from the ravages of the predication puzzle. Identity being a practical postulate, modelled on the immediacy of felt self-identity, the postulation of absolute conceptual identity developed very slowly, and there never was any practical danger lest the meaning of the postulate should be pressed into a form calculated to defeat its original purpose. The inherence of attributes in a substance, the relation of a thing to its qualities, are not as such practical problems, and the difficulties which the intellectual play of reflective idlers has discovered in them did not exist in practice. In practice the meaning of terms was defined by their use, and the will-o'-the-wisp of a 'truth' dissevered from utility had not yet been permitted to frustrate the very instinct of which it claimed to be the loftiest satisfaction, nor to eviscerate the conception of 'truth' of its real meaning.

And so tacit convention kept the identity postulated true to a sense that allowed of the possibility of predication.

Hence that S should be S and yet also P, nay that it could be P, just because it was primarily S, seemed no more remarkable than that the self which was glutted with beef yesterday should to-day be hungry, and just because of this identity, should prepare once more to assume the predicate of 'beef-eater.' It would be vain therefore to impose on the logic of postulation with bogies of an identity excluding differences; the calm reply would be that postulates need not, and must not, be pressed beyond the point at which they fulfil their

purpose. An interpretation of identity therefore which excluded predication would stultify our supreme purpose in reasoning as completely as a failure to identify, and would *therefore* be invalid.

And yet we should be equally stern in resisting the allurements to evade the difficulty by relaxing the strictness with which identity is postulated in every valid argument. To the objection that 'abstract identity' would be the death of predication, because if *A* were perfectly and unalterably *A* it could never become anything else, the answer is plain. Abstract identity is never found, but has always to be made. It is made, therefore, in whatever way and to whatever extent it is needed, and remains subservient to the purpose of its maker. It is a postulated ideal which works, though nature never quite conforms to it; before it could be fully realised, the need to which it ministers, the necessity of unceasing predication which is forced upon us by the Becoming of the world, would have had to pass away; and once we had transcended change, identity, together with the processes of discursive thinking which are built upon it, might safely be added to the weapons discarded by the spirit in its advance towards perfection. But as a matter of fact identity continues to be useful just because it continues to be a postulate which never is fully realised. It may therefore blandly be admitted that *A is A* is an impotent truism, so long as it is vividly realised that *A shall be A* is an active truth that remoulds the world.

§ 34. It is in its limitations, perhaps, that the postulatory nature of the principle of identity, and of the conceptual use of mental imagery based on it, appears most clearly. For, as has already been remarked, there ever remains a discrepancy between the identity of the real and the logical ideal, a discrepancy to which we have grown accustomed, a discrepancy on which the use of the concept depends, but which, indubitably, renders identity a postulate rather than a 'law.'

For in strict fact nothing ever *is*, everything *becomes*, and turns our most conscientious predications into false-

hoods. The real is here, there, and everywhere, until we stop breathless in our chase and *point*, gasping. The 'eternal truths,' unable to sustain the pace, have long ceased to reside with us—if indeed they ever gladdened us with theophanies even in the Golden Age of Plato—and have gone down or up (one really cannot be precise about astronomical directions in these Copernican days) into the τόπος νοητός, where it is possible to preserve one's dignity without doing any work. In their stead we have craftily devised conventions, such as that becoming *shall mean* being, and that *for our purposes* relative identity may, under the proper precautions, serve as well as absolute. But we stand unalterably committed to the postulate that identity there shall be, though everywhere we have to make it and by force to fit it on the facts. And so we get on very nicely with truths, as with dresses, that last only for the occasion or for a season, and console ourselves with visions that in the end Being will absorb Becoming and impermanence cease from troubling and predication be completely true and unchanging and perfect and categorical. If by that time we have outgrown the very need of predication, it does not matter to us now; for nothing of the sort is likely to happen to any of us for ever so long!

VI

§ 35. The myth of Edwin and Angelina has reminded me (perchance by ἀνάμνησις) of another of still more ancient date, and if I have obtained forgiveness for telling so much about them, I may venture to relate the story of another being whose name was *Grumps*. Or rather, that would have been his name, if names had then been invented. I cannot quite say who or what Grumps was, but he lived ever so long ago and was very stupid, *very nearly* as stupid as everybody else. He was so stupid that he did not know the difference between himself and other people, but still in his muddled way—he lived, I fancy, in the slime at the bottom of the sea—he wanted to be happy, though he did not know himself nor what

his happiness could be. But one day (or night—it does not really matter which it was,—because there was no light) he made a mistake and got outside a jagged flint stone which he could not digest. It hurt him very much and he nearly died. But ever after his agony Grumps knew the difference between himself and other people, and whenever anything hurt him or happened not to his liking (which was very often) he put it down to the other people. For he felt sure he would never hurt himself. And it made such a difference to his way of living that he grew very big and fat. But everybody else was too stupid to know why.

Which fable, being translated into the decent obscurity of technical language, means that the 'external' world is a postulate, made to extrude inharmonious elements from consciousness, *de jure* if not *de facto*, in order to avoid ascribing them to the nature of the self. Not of course, that this is at first consciously so argued, or that the segregation of the two poles of the experience-process into Self and Not-Self need be conceived as arising otherwise than *pari passu*. But we may conceive that it is the *felt unsatisfactoriness* of experience which suggests the differentiation of Subject and Object and postulation of the latter as an alien 'Other,' *causing* the unsatisfactoriness.

The advantage and the confirmation are obvious as before. And if any one will not believe me, let him go to bed and dream; he will find that there too he projects his dream world from himself and ascribes to it externality, just because, and in so far as, he is baffled by an experience he cannot control.

Contrariwise it may be conjectured that if we got to heaven (having forgotten our whole past) and found that everything took exactly the course desired, no sense of the 'otherness' of our experience could grow up. We should either suppose that we were almighty, that everything was what it was because we desired it, or we should cease to make the distinction between self and 'other,' *i.e.* should cease to be self-conscious.

§ 36. The postulatory aspect of other important axioms I must pass over lightly. The principle of Contradiction may be taken as simply the negative side of that of Identity; in demanding that *A* shall be itself, we demand also that it shall be capable of excluding whatever threatens its identity. Applied to propositions, it demands that we shall be enabled to avoid the jar of incongruous judgments; but the volitional nature of this demand is clearly attested by the frequency with which contradictions are *de facto* entertained by minds which either do not allow them to come into actual conflict, or actually enjoy the conflict. The Principle of Excluded Middle similarly, demands that it shall be possible to make distinctions sharp and disjunctions complete, in order that we may thereby tame the continuous flux of experiences. But in both these cases (as before) our postulates are not precise transcriptions of fact; they are valid because they work, because nature can be made to conform to them, even though not wholly. They derive therefore their real meaning and true validity from the fact that they are applicable to experience, that incompatibles and strict alternatives are met with, that contrary and exclusive attributes are found.

§ 37. I may here call attention to the fact that in scientific research the postulatory procedure of our intelligence is displayed in the formation of *Hypotheses*. A hypothesis is a suggestion we assume and (however tentatively) *act on*, in order to see whether it will work. It always proceeds from some degree of psychological interest; for about that in which no one is interested no one frames even the most fleeting hypothesis. A real hypothesis therefore is never gratuitous; it is purposive and aims at the explanation of some subject. In other words it presupposes a desire for its explanation and is framed so as to satisfy that desire. The desire for an answer stimulates us to put the question to nature and nature to the question.[1] We assume, that is, that the hypothesis is true, because it would be satisfactory

[1] Or, as Lady Welby says, it is the *pressure of the answer* that puts the question.

if it were, and then we try and see whether it is workable. If it is not, we are more or less disappointed, but try again; if it is, it rapidly rises to be the theory of the phenomena under investigation, and may under favourable circumstances attain to axiomatic value for the purposes of the inquiry. A good example of this is afforded by the conception of Evolution. This originated as a wild hypothesis suggested by remote analogies; in the hands of Darwin it became a theory which correlated a vast number of facts; and now its usefulness is so universally recognised that it is accepted without discussion as a methodological axiom which guides research in all the sciences concerned with the history of events.

Now the fundamental part played by Hypothesis in the discovery of new truth is being more and more plainly admitted by logicians. Novelty neither arises by formal ratiocination *in vacuo*, as an apriorist logic seemed to imply, nor yet is it spontaneously generated by the mere congregation of facts, as logical empiricism strove to maintain. Facts must be interpreted by intelligence, but intelligence always operates upon the basis of previously established fact. The growth of knowledge is an *active assimilation* of the new by the old. Or in other words, our hypotheses are suggested by, and start from, the facts of already established knowledge, and then are tested by experience. We confront them with the new and dubious facts and try to work with them; and upon the results of this trial their ultimate fate depends.

Now this is exactly what we have seen to be our procedure in postulating. We must start from a psychical experience which suggests the postulate (= the previous fact suggesting the hypothesis); we must use the postulate (or hypothesis) as a means to an end which appears desirable; we must apply the postulate to experience (a postulate and a hypothesis not capable of and not intended for use are alike invalid); and the final validity of the postulate (or hypothesis) depends on the extent to which experience can be rendered congruous with it.

May we not infer that the use of Hypothesis in the

logic of induction confirms our assertion of the postulatory origin of axioms? Is it not the same process which now yields fresh truth which we supposed to have been active from the first and to have laid the foundations of knowledge? And if it can now establish the validity of the truths it elicits, why should it not first of all have established its own validity by establishing the validity of our fundamental axioms?

§ 38. The principle of Causation again is pretty plainly a postulate. Causation, as James says,[1] is an altar to an unknown god, a demand for something, we know not what, that shall enable us to break up and to control the given course of events. Now this demand may be satisfied in various ways at different times and for various purposes, in a manner which greatly conduces to the vitality of controversy. Historically, our original model for constructing the conception of cause is our immediate experience in moving our limbs, on the basis of which the far-famed 'necessary connection'—which at bottom is only the conceptual translation of the feeling of 'having to'—is postulated. This primitive conception of causation, however, does not prove adequate for all our later purposes, especially when, as is usually the case, it is misunderstood and mismanaged. So we proceed to other formulations of causality, which, however, are no less clearly dependent on our experiences and relative to our purposes. 'Cause' means identity when we wish to construct the equations of physics and mechanics; it means regular succession when we are content to view phenomena from without; it involves real agency when, as rarely occurs on the plane of the natural sciences,[2] we desire to grasp the motive forces of phenomena from within. Every event *shall have* a cause—in order that we may be able to produce it or to check its production. Similarly the principle of

[1] *Principles of Psychology*, ii. p. 671.

[2] The possible exception is biology, in which the Darwinian method puts difficulties into the way of regarding organisms as automata whose psychic life may be neglected. For if psychic activity has no causal efficacy, why was it developed in a world controlled by the law of struggle for existence?

sufficient Reason demands that everything shall be capable of reasoned connection with all things—*i.e.* we decline to live among *disjecta membra* of a universe.

How intensely postulatory these axioms are, is best seen when we consider what is too often neglected, viz. the limits of their use. The unchanging is the uncaused; no reason is required for that which is 'self-evident.' But, psychologically, everything is self-evident which provokes no question, and what alone would be absolutely self-evident would be the absolutely satisfactory. Thus the only complete logical truth would be one which left no room for further questions by reason of its absolute psychological satisfactoriness. And conversely nothing arouses the questioning spirit more readily than the unsatisfactory. As has well been said, there is a problem of evil, but not of good. It is precisely in so far, therefore, as experience is unsatisfactory that we have need of a principle of Sufficient Reason. It has to be left, with so much of the panoply of practical life, at the gates of Heaven.

Comprehended as a postulate, therefore, the principle of Sufficient Reason no longer exercises an unsympathising tyranny of pure reason over reluctant desires; it does not drive us to seek for reasons that can never satisfy without end; it only enables us to assign a reason whenever we will, and the situation seems to us to need one.

The λύσις of the ἀπορία of the infinite regress of causes is similar. It means "you may go back as far as ever you will"; it does *not* mean "you must go back, whether you will or not." As for the unchanging (or what is taken to be such) the causal demand has no power over it; it has no cause because it has no changes with which it is practically necessary to grapple.

§ 39. Upon the assumption of the existence of universal laws of nature, otherwise known as the Uniformity of Nature, I may bestow a somewhat fuller treatment, for reasons which can perhaps be conjectured by those of my readers who have been engaged in philosophic instruction.

To primitive man—we may suppose ourselves to have got down to semi-historical times—nature inevitably still appears very chaotic and uncomfortable. He desires an explanation of the circumstances that oppress him, and is prepared to clutch at any straw. He partially gratifies this desire by projecting as the 'causes' of such happenings 'spirits' naturally and necessarily conceived *ex analogia hominis*, and wild and malevolent enough to account for the chaos and the discomfort.

But after all the chaos is not complete; it is interspersed with gleams of uniformity. Though under the promptings of misplaced paternal pride, Helios may conceivably entrust his chariot to the unpractised hands of Phaethon, yet within the memory of the oldest inhabitant the sun has risen and set with regularity. So too a number of organic rhythms, breathing, cardiac pumping, digestion, hunger, etc., have by this time reached a regularity which can hardly be overlooked. There is therefore no lack of psychical experience to *suggest* regularity, and the whole force of association, driving the mind into habitual courses, disposes it to expect a recurrence of the familiar.

Perfect regularity, therefore, can be postulated; and the temptation to do so is great. For while no amelioration of man's miserable state can be expected from the scientific caution that dares not step beyond the narrow bounds of precedent, the postulation of universal laws is fraught with infinite possibilities of power. If nature is regular, it can be trusted; the future will resemble the past—at least enough to calculate it—and so our past experience will serve as guide to future conduct. There is, moreover, a glorious simplicity about calculating the future by the assumption that out of the hurly-burly of events in time and space may be extracted changeless formulas whose chaste abstraction soars above all reference to any 'where' or 'when,' and thereby renders them blank cheques to be filled up at our pleasure with any figures of the sort. The only question is—Will Nature honour the cheque? *Audentes Natura juvat*—let us take

our life in our hands and try! If we fail, our blood will be on our own heads (or, more probably, in some one else's stomach), but though we fail, we are in no worse case than those who dared not postulate: uncomprehended chaos will engulf both them and us. If we succeed, we have the clue to the labyrinth. Our assumption, therefore, is at least a methodological necessity; it may turn out to be (or be near) a fundamental fact in nature. We stand to lose nothing and to gain everything by making a postulate which is both a practical necessity and an obvious methodological assumption, pointing out a way of investigating a subject with which we must grapple, if we will to carry on the struggle which is life.

Quid plura? Experience has shown that Nature condones our audacity, and step by step our assumption has been confirmed. The 'reign of law' has turned out to be as absolute as ever we chose to make it, and our assumption has worked wherever we have chosen to apply it. Thus the speculations to which we were first driven in the hungry teeth of savage facts by the slender hope of profit, by the overpowering fear of the ruin which stared us in the face, have slowly ceased to be speculative and become the foundations of the ordinary everyday business of life. Our postulates have grown respectable, and are now entitled axioms.

§ 40. By way of a change I may pass to consider the function of the postulate in a very different region, viz. the construction of our conceptions of Space and Time, which since Kant it has become difficult not to treat of in analogous fashion. In Kant, of course, it will be remembered that they are treated as twin instances of 'pure' '*intuition*' or '*perception*' (*reine Anschauung*) giving rise to synthetic judgments *a priori* and needing to be systematically distinguished both from perceptions (*Wahrnehmung*) and from conceptions. Nevertheless it will hardly escape an unprejudiced observer that a 'pure intuition' is strangely intermediate between a perception and a conception.

Of this curious fact the explanation which I shall venture to suggest is that in reality the *reine Anschauung* is a hermaphrodite, *both* perceptual and conceptual, and that Kant's doctrine on the subject rests on a systematic confounding of these two aspects. He argues first that Space and Time cannot be perceptions by appealing to their conceptual nature, and then that they cannot be conceptions by appealing to their perceptual character. So he has to construct the pure intuition as a third thing which they may safely be, seeing that they can be neither percepts nor concepts. But he has overlooked the possible alternative that, as so often, the same word has to do duty both for percept and concept, and that by 'Space' and 'Time' we mean now the one and now the other. This ambiguity having escaped his notice,[1] the result is that the whole doctrine of the Transcendental Æsthetic is pervaded by a thorough-going confusion of psychology and logic.

As against Kant, I shall contend that the nature of Space and Time remains an inexhaustible source of paradox and perplexity, until it is recognised that in each case what has happened has been that certain psychological data have been made the basis of conceptual constructions by a course of methodological postulation.

§ 41. In the case of Space these psychological data consist of the inherent extension or spatiality of the perceptions of the senses of sight and 'touch' (= pressure + muscular contraction + articular motion), in consequence whereof we can no more *perceive* the unextended than (despite Kant) we can *perceive* empty Space. These perceptual spaces are fused by the necessities (needs) of practical life, which force us to correlate the visual and tactile images of objects, into a single perceptual or real space, in which we suppose ourselves and all objective realities to be immersed. Thus spatiality is a given attribute of the real world as empirical originally as its colour or its weight.

[1] The simplest and most flagrant proof of this is to be found in the fact that Kant does not distinguish between the problems of *pure* and *applied* geometry.

But this real space is very far from being identical with the space of the geometers. Geometrical space is a conceptual construction founded upon space-perception and aiming at the simplest system of calculating the behaviour of bodies in real space—a matter obviously of the greatest practical importance. Hence it is built up by a series of postulates into an ideal structure which *at no point coincides with our perceptual space and in many respects is even antithetical to it.*

Thus it is commonly stated that 'Space' (conceptual) is one, empty, homogeneous, continuous, infinite, infinitely divisible, identical, and invariable. Now every one of these attributes is the product of an idealising construction the purpose of which is to facilitate the interpretation and manipulation of the movements of bodies in real (physical or perceptual) space, which stands in the sharpest contrast with our conceptual construction by being many, filled, heterogeneous, continuous only for perception (if atomism be true), probably finite,[1] *not* infinitely divisible (atoms again !) and variable.

And this is how and why we construct the qualities of our ideal geometrical space. We make it *one* and identical by correlating our sense-spaces, by fusing the multitude of fields of vision and by refusing to recognise the spaces of our dream experiences, in order that we may have a common standard to which we can refer all our space-perceptions. We make it empty and invariable by abstracting from that which fills it and changes in it, in order that nothing may distract us from the contemplation of its pure form. We make it infinite and infinitely divisible by carrying actual motions and divisions on *in thought*, because it is sweet to imagine that no limit exists beyond which we cannot penetrate. We make it continuous by idealising an (apparent) feature of perception, in order to confer upon it a mystic invulnerability. And lastly we make it homogeneous—structureless, and *therefore* able to receive any and every

[1] I should say 'certainly' myself, but I prefer to understate the case. Cf. *Riddles of the Sphinx*, ch. ix. § 2-11.

structure—in order to relieve our minds and practical forecasts of the utter and incalculable heterogeneity which renders the physical qualities of real space different at every point. And last of all we make perceptual and conceptual space share in the same name, because for practical purposes we want to identify the latter with the former and to affirm its validity, and are not concerned to save philosophers from confusion.

And yet when the philosopher has laboriously disentangled the varied threads that are woven into the texture of practical life, and questions us, we can realise the character of our constructions. We can see full well that all these attributes which conceptual space postulates are impossible in perceptual space; that is just the reason why we demand them. They are pure abstractions which idealise the actual and serve the purpose of enabling us to simplify and to calculate its behaviour. And so long as our assumptions come sufficiently near to reality for our practical purposes, we have no reason to emphasise the distinction between the two senses of 'Space' and indeed are interested rather in slurring over the divergence between pure and applied mathematics.

§ 42. Our assumption, then, of geometrical space is true because it works and in so far as it works. But does it work? In modern times ingenious attempts have been made to contest this assumption, and to reconstruct geometry 'on an empirical basis' or at least, to construct alternatives to the traditional 'geometry of Euclid.' These 'metageometrical' speculations have indulged in many crudities and extravagances and have not in all cases succeeded in freeing themselves from the very confusions they were destined to dissipate. But they have achieved a great work in stirring up philosophers out of their dogmatic trust in 'the certainty of mathematics,' and forcing them to realise the true nature of geometric postulates.

The chief philosophic results of the Non-Euclidian metageometry are briefly these. The Euclidian space-construction rests upon 'the postulate of Euclid' as to

parallel straight lines, which Euclid postulated in the innocency of his heart, because he wanted it, and the indemonstrableness of which had ever since been considered a disgrace to geometry. The simple explanation of this fact proffered by metageometry is that conceptual space is a generic conception capable of being construed in several specific ways, and that Euclid's postulate (or its equivalent, the equality of the angles of the triangle to two right angles) stated the specific differentia of the space Euclid proceeded to construct. But out of the same data of spatial perception other systems of conceptual geometry might have been constructed, whose distinctive postulates (as to the number of 'parallels' to be drawn through a given point or as to the sum of the angles of the 'triangle') diverged symmetrically from that of Euclid and would give rise to coherent, consistent and *necessary* geometries, logically on a par with Euclid's and differing from the latter only in the point of usefulness.

For, however much the new geometries of 'spherical' and 'pseudo-spherical' space[1] might claim to rival the logical perfections of the traditional geometry, they have not been able to contest its practical supremacy. Their assumptions are much less simple, and their consequences are much less calculable and much less easily applicable to the behaviour of objects in real space. It seems to be possible indeed to conceive experiences which would be most easily and conveniently interpreted on metageometrical assumptions, but it has had to be reluctantly acknowledged that so far no such experiences have fallen to our lot. Euclidian geometry is fully competent to do the work we demand of our geometrical constructions.

But that does not make it more *real* than its rivals. They are *all three* conceptual constructions which may or may not be *valid* and *useful*, but which are alike incompetent to claim *existence*. Hence the question which

[1] The alleged geometry of *four* dimensions seems to rest on a false analogy. The three dimensions of our space constructions are empirical and depend on the original data of our space-senses, which in their turn seem to depend on the triple analysis of motions by means of the semicircular canals of the ear, and the behaviour of the physical bodies to which they are adaptations.

has been so much debated in metageometrical controversy, viz. 'whether our space is Euclidian or not' is strictly nonsense. It is like asking whether the Sistine Madonna *is* the mother of Christ. To ask whether our space is Euclidian or Non-Euclidian is like disputing whether this assertion may be more truly made of the Sistine Madonna or of the Madonna della Sedia. For like Raphael's pictures all our conceptual geometries are ideal interpretations of a reality, which they surpass in beauty and symmetry, but upon which they ultimately depend, and it would be hard to adduce more eloquent testimony of the dependence of these theoretic structures on practical needs than the fact that from the first the conceptual interpretation of spatial experiences instinctively adopted by mankind should have been that which subsequent analysis has shown to be the simplest, easiest, and most manageable.

§ 43. For illustrative purposes the construction of the conception of Time is vastly inferior to that of Space. The conception of Time involves a much more arduous effort of abstraction and its lack of '*Anschaulichkeit*' is such that it can hardly be conceived, and certainly cannot be used, without an appeal to spatial metaphor. Hence I must confine myself to a few hints showing the close analogy of the method of its conceptual construction with that of Space, in the hope that they may prove *φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν*.

Nothing but misunderstanding of the nature of Time is possible unless it is recognised that the word covers *three* different things which may be distinguished as *subjective*, *objective*, and *conceptual* Time.

Of these subjective Time (or *times*, since every centre of experience possesses an indefinite plurality of his own, if we do not—as for practical purposes we always do —exclude the times of dreams, etc.) alone can claim to be a matter of immediate experience. It consists in the psychical facts of succession and memory, and its 'present time' always has duration. It forms the psychological basis of all time-constructions, but for practical purposes it is well nigh useless. Our subjective time estimates

vary too enormously for us to live by them. The time which to the philosopher may pass all too rapidly in metaphysical discussion, may bore the schoolboy to extinction; and conversely the philosopher might prefer extinction to listening for three hours a-day to a discussion of cricket matches or to a Parliamentary debate.

Hence for the purposes of what Prof. Ward calls intersubjective intercourse it is necessary to devise or somehow to advance to a 'Time' which shall be more objective. *Objective* Time is what we live by, and what we read upon the faces of our 'time-pieces' (provided they 'keep time'!) correcting thereby our subjective estimates of the flow of successive experience. As this example shows, objective time depends upon constructions (including that of our watches) and motions, or more precisely, upon the *synchronism* of motions and the assumption of physical constants. But it remains wholly relative, and this enables the philosopher to deduce some curious and interesting consequences.[1]

To reach absolute 'Newtonian' Time, flowing equably and immutably from a infinite and irrevocable Past, through a 'punctual' (*i.e.* durationless and infinitely divisible) and yet exclusively real Present, to an infinite Future, conceptual postulation has to be called into play. The absoluteness and equable flow are demands for a constancy which objective Time will not show; the construction of Past, Present, and Future results from the need to arrange the facts of memory; the infinity and infinite divisibility, as in the case of space, result from a thinking away of the contents and limits of the actual experience. But on the whole the usefulness of conceptual Time seems very limited, and is counterbalanced by troublesome antinomies as soon as it is separated from the experience it is intended to interpret.[2]

§ 44. I pass over the axiomatic postulates of arithmetic, the methodological postulates which are found in every

[1] Cf. *Riddles of the Sphinx*, ch. iii. § 6, and ix. § 11.

[2] The best illustration of this perhaps is that if conceptual Time were real, or 'Time' really had the attributes postulated for it, Achilles never could catch the Tortoise. Cf. *Riddles of the Sphinx*, ch. xii. § 11.

science and the metaphysical postulates involved in the conception of substance: the first, because I may refer to Prof. James's account of them in the *Principles of Psychology* (ii. p. 653 foll.) and have no desire to 'outdo the good man'; the second, because of their number and the amount of special knowledge which it requires to expound and appreciate them; the third, because in all its traditional forms I am sceptical as to the usefulness, and therefore as to the validity, of the conception of substance, and cannot stay to propound measures for its reform.[1]

§ 45. On the other hand too much may be gleaned from the consideration of postulates which are not yet acknowledged to be axiomatic, nor indeed universally to be valid, for us to pass them over. I may mention in the first instance the assumption of Teleology.[2]

Teleology in one sense is an indubitable postulate of the highest significance. In the interpretation of nature, we must always assume a certain conformity between nature and human nature, in default of which the latter cannot understand the former. Thus human nature is the sole key to nature which we possess, and if it will not unlock the arcana, we must resign ourselves to sceptical despair. If, therefore, every attempt to know rests on the fundamental methodological postulate that the world is knowable, we must also postulate that it can be interpreted *ex analogia hominis* and anthropomorphically.[3] And moreover *the closer* the correspond-

[1] The outcome of orthodox philosophic criticism of the substance-concept at present seems to be that substantiality cannot be legitimately affirmed of the psychical and must be reserved for the physical. Meanwhile the substantiality of the ultimate counters of physical speculation is becoming more and more shadowy, and its assumption more and more superfluous. The situation seems to me somewhat absurd. But *que faire* so long as those concerned prefer the fog and decline to clear the atmosphere? Cf. however my art. on the *Conception of* Ἐνέργεια (*Mind*, N.S., No. 36).

[2] By Teleology I do *not* mean, of course, the contemplation of parts in their relation to a whole, but what the word—until (by way of compromising with its enemies) it was attenuated to a futile shadow of itself—always meant, viz. the assertion of purposive intelligence as an agency in the world.

[3] Cf. *Riddles of the Sphinx*, ch. v. § 6. As Dr. Julius Schultz well says in his stimulating book, *Die Psychologie der Axiome* (p. 99 and *passim*), to think is to anthropomorphise. Intellectualists will perhaps admit this eventually —shortly before their extinction!

ence between nature and human nature can be shown to be, *the more knowable* will the world be, and the more we shall feel at home in it. Hence, it is a methodological demand to anthropomorphise the world as far as ever we can.

Now human nature, in so far as it is 'rational,' is teleological—it pursues ends which appear to it reasonable and desirable, and tends to become more and more systematically purposive the more highly it develops. Of course, therefore, we must try to find this action for the sake of ends throughout nature, or if we fail, to find the most efficient approximation to it we can. Now, with regard to the actions of our fellowmen, and indeed in the case of all animal life, the full ascription of teleology is not only practicable but practically unavoidable. But with regard to the other departments of nature, and indeed nature as a whole, modern science has persuaded itself that teleological explanations are at present unworkable and therefore 'unscientific.' The ideal of scientific explanation is 'mechanical,' and this is taken to be anti-teleological.

So far, therefore, teleology *remains a postulate*, which it is not possible to carry through, and to render an axiom of biological or physical research. The situation is deplorable, but not desperate. For, in the first place, the antiteleological bias of natural science is largely due to the perverse use professing teleologists have made of their postulate. Instead of treating it as a method whereby to understand the complex relations of reality, they have made it into an *ἀργὸς λόγος* which shut off all further possibilities of investigation, by ascribing everything to a 'divine purpose,' and then, in order to shirk the laborious task of tracing the working of the divine intelligence in the world, adding the suicidal 'rider' that the divine purpose was *inscrutable*. Teleological explanation was thus rendered impossible, while the mechanical assumptions were found to be capable of working out into valuable results, it is true of a lower order of intelligibility. In the second place, although

the teleological postulate is not useful in the present stage of scientific development, that is not to say that it cannot be rendered useful hereafter. It is open to any one to adopt the method, and if he can show valuable results attained thereby, he will not find true scientists slow to recognise its validity. Hitherto indeed the method has failed, not so much because men could not use it, as because they would not, or at least would not use it properly. If, at any time, they should want to use it, they would probably find that it was useful far beyond the limits of its present application.

§ 46. But even these limits are in reality far wider than is ordinarily recognised. In another way from that which we have just been considering the validity of teleology is raised above the very possibility of question. What are these mechanical explanations which have so successfully preoccupied the fertile fields of science? They are devices of our own, *methods* which we have tried and found workable, ideals conceived by our *intelligence* to which we are coaxing reality to approximate; they are pervaded by human purposiveness through and through, and prove that, so far as we have tried, nature conforms to our thoughts and desires, and is *anthropomorphic enough to be mechanical*. In being mechanical it plays into our hands, as James says, and confesses itself to be intelligible and teleological *to that extent at least*. There is no intelligibility without conformity with human nature, and human nature is teleological. A mechanically law-abiding universe does conform to some of our demands and is so far intelligible. We must assume, therefore, that this conformity will extend further, that, if we try sincerely and pertinaciously and ingeniously enough, we can force nature to reveal itself as *wholly* conformable to our nature and our demands. Nothing less than that will content us, and nothing less than that need be assumed. Nay, any attempt to stop short at something less, *e.g.* at a world which was mechanically intelligible, or even intellectually intelligible, but ignored our moral and emotional demands, would seem to jeopardise all that the pertinacity

of our sciences has achieved. A world which can be 'fully explained,' but only in mechanical or barely intellectual terms, is *not* fully intelligible, is *not* fully explained. Nay, at bottom it involves the most abysmal unintelligibility of all, to my thinking. It lures us into thinking it rational, only to check our progress by insuperable barriers later on. Compared with the tantalising torment of this supposition, and the derisive doubt it reflects on all our earlier 'successes,' a scepticism which consistently assumes a fundamental incommensurability of man and his experience, and a consequent unknowableness of the world, and patiently endures their practical consequences, would seem more tolerable and dignified.

We must, therefore, assume all or nothing—we have some (unless we choose to lose it by lack of faith); we must hope and strive for all. Shall we then, in face of all the successes of our sciences, infer that all intelligence (our own included) is a fond delusion for which there is no room *vis-à-vis* of true reality? *O miseras hominum mentes, o pectora cæca!* Can it really be that they *cannot* see that every triumph of the most rabidly 'anti-teleological' mechanical method is, from the 'synoptic' standpoint of philosophy, so much more welcome testimony to the power of the human mind and will to grapple with its experience, and confirms the validity of its teleological assumptions? At all events such blindness, whether it be involuntary or voluntary, is not possible to one who has grasped the truth that theoretic truths are the children of postulation. His eyes are opened, and the question whether teleology is valid is finally closed. For is not his whole theory one continuous and overwhelming illustration of the doctrine that without purposive activity there would be no knowledge, no order, no rational experience, nothing to explain, and no means of explaining anything? What, in a word, is his whole account of mental organisation but a demonstration of the *teleology of axioms?*

§ 47. I must pass over with a mere mention sundry postulates of a religious character, whose position has

been rendered still more dubious than that of teleology by the prevailing misconceptions as to the validity of postulation. An intelligent reader will perhaps gather from what has been said in the last section why the Personality of God should be esteemed an indispensable postulate. The fact again that the goodness of God is a methodological postulate[1] will be found to throw much light on the rationality of all religions, just as the pitiably inadequate way in which it has actually been carried out illustrates the irrationality which unfortunately ever clings even to the best of them.

Is Immortality a postulate, as Kant maintained? If so, in what sense and to what extent? These are questions well worthy of being pondered, not without a cautious discrimination between immortality in Heaven and in Hell. But at present we are too profoundly ignorant as to what men actually desire in the matter, and why, and how, to decide what they ought to desire. Hence, pending the publication of the results of a statistical inquiry undertaken by the American Branch of Society for Psychical Research, which I hope will yield copious and valuable data, profitable discussion of these questions must be postponed.[2]

VII

§ 48. Having in the above sections exemplified the method by which the postulatory nature of representative axioms may be displayed, I may proceed to round off my essay with some concluding reflections.

I will begin with a couple of cautions. In the first

[1] Even devil-worshippers must assume that their god is susceptible to flattery and capable of being propitiated, *i.e.* is *good to them*; a thorough fiend would paralyse all religious activity. As for a non-moral 'deity,' it cannot be worshipped and may with impunity be ignored. Wherefore, *q.e.d.*

[2] It seems probable that the result will be to show that though immortality may be (logically) a postulate it is not (psychologically) postulated, or at least not postulated with scientific intent. If so the anomalous condition of the doctrine is due to the fact that the great majority do not desire to have a future life proved, do not attempt to prove it, and thwart the few who do attempt this. Hence the state of our knowledge remains commensurate with that of our desire, and the 'postulate' remains a mere postulate without developing into a source of knowledge.

place in default of a knowledge of the historical details of the psychological development of our earlier postulates, I have had to content myself with schematic derivations in logical order. The real procedure was probably far more complicated, casual, and gradual, and far less conscious than I have represented it. In fact I see little reason to suppose that any of the makers of the early postulates had any consciousness of the logical import of their procedure or knew why they made them. We know this often to have been the case, that, *e.g.* the logical and geometrical postulates were used long before they were reflected on scientifically, and still longer before they were *understood*. But this is no real difficulty, and we can study the psychological processes involved by observing any one who is persuading himself of the truth of what he would like and would find it convenient to believe, *e.g.* that he loves where money is, or that being in love his mistress is perfection. It is only for the cold-blooded analysis of an unconcerned observer that logical chasms yawn in such processes; the agent himself in the heat of action is wafted over them unawares by the impetuous flow of instinctive feeling, and would doubtless reject our analysis of his motives with the sincerest indignation.

For to an unreflective and uncritical mind whatever looks likely to gratify desire presents itself with an inevitableness and æsthetic self-evidence which precludes all doubt. And we are all unreflective and uncritical enough to accept the self-evidence also of the devices we denominate 'truth,' until at least the doubt as to their real character has been forced upon us.

It should be clear from this how I should conceive the logical question with regard to postulation to be related to the psychological, and how I should reply to an objector who was willing to grant that postulation is the method whereby we come by our axioms psychologically, but denied that this affected the logical problem of their justification.

To this we should reply that we also distinguish between the motives which assume and the trials which

justify an axiom. A postulate does not become axiomatic until it has been found to be workable and in proportion as it is so. But we deny that the two questions can be separated and logic be cut adrift from psychology and dissipated in the ether of the unintelligible. Psychological processes are the vehicles of truth, and logical value must be found in psychological fact *or nowhere*. Before a principle can have its logical validity determined, it must be tried; and it can be tried only if some one can be induced to postulate it. Logical possibilities (or even 'necessities') are nothing until they have somehow become psychologically actual and active. A 'truth' which no one ever conceives is nothing. It is certainly no truth.

Hence it is impossible to treat the logical question of axioms without reference to the actual processes whereby they are established, and their actual functioning in minds which entertain the logical in close connection with their other ideals. If therefore it is by postulation that we *do know*, we cannot but base on postulation our theory of how we *ought to know*. Here, as elsewhere, the ideals of the normative science must be developed out of the facts of the descriptive science. Regarded from the standpoint of the higher *purpose* of the former,[1] the psychological processes must be purged of the hesitations, inconsistencies and irrelevancies which clog them in their actual occurrence, and when this evaluation is completed, it yields the norms which *ought to be*, but as yet *are only in part*. Thus (as must indeed have become obvious to a careful reader of the preceding sections) the logical account of Postulation is an idealised version of the course of actual postulating. But for this very reason it has a guiding power over the actual processes, which the fancy processes of an abstracted logic, legislating vainly in the void, can never claim.

§ 49. Secondly, I am of course aware that in applying to the problem of knowledge the *method of origins* I am debarred in one sense from giving a *complete* explanation.

[1] Which of course is itself a psychological fact.

For granting that I have succeeded in connecting our cognitive apparatus with the earlier functions of consciousness by means of the principle of the postulate, it is open to any one to demand the reason why we should be capable of feeling and volition, and so gradually to drive me back into the formless, mindless, undifferentiated void which is conceived to precede all evolution. That this difficulty should occur in *all* theories is no answer, and a poor consolation.

The true answer is that the method of origins is of relative validity and that in the end we *never* find out 'what a thing really is' by asking 'what it was in the beginning.' Nor does the true value of the method reside in the (illusory) starting-point to which it goes back, but in the knowledge it acquires on the way. The true nature of a thing is to be found in its validity—which, however, must be *connected* rather than *contrasted* with its origin. 'What a thing really is' appears from what it *does*, and so we must study its whole career. We study its past to forecast its future, and to find out what it is really 'driving at.' Any complete explanation, therefore, is by final causes, and implies a knowledge of ends and aims which we can often only imperfectly detect.

All this of course applies also to the case of knowledge. Knowledge cannot be derived out of something other and more primitive; even if the feat were feasible, it would only explain *ignotum per ignotius*. Hence to analyse it into 'elements' and 'primary forms' is in a manner illusory; so long as its structure is not completed, the final significance of its forms cannot be clearly mirrored in its structure. Ultimately, therefore, it is impossible to explain the higher by the lower, the living organism of growing truth by its dissected members. If we desire completeness, we must look not to the ὕλη, as in different ways our theories of knowledge all have done,[1] but to the

[1] For both the apriorist and the empiricist accounts add this to the catalogue of their shortcomings. Both explain the system of actual concrete knowledge which is growing to completion in the cosmic process, by a reference to the beggarly elements out of which it has arisen, composed of the abhorrent skeleton

τέλος. And to claim definitive finality for any present theory of knowledge would seem to crave no slight equipment with the panoply of ignorance.

But is the end in sight? Can we infer from what knowledge has been, and now is, what it should be, and God willing, will be? We can of course (as explained in the last section) construct, to some extent, the ideal on the basis of our knowledge of the actual. But though therefore an answer is not perhaps wholly inconceivable even to this question, an exploration of the seventh Heaven is hardly germane to the present inquiry.

§ 50. I cannot more fitly close this rough sketch of a great subject than by adding a few words as to the probable effect on philosophy of a more general adoption of the principle I have advocated. It may, I think, reasonably be anticipated that it will have a reviving and most invigorating influence upon an invaluable constituent of human culture which too often has been betrayed by the professing champions who were bound and paid to sustain its banner against the attacks of fools and Philistines. Philosophy is once again, as so often in its history, 'the sick man' among the sciences: it has suffered unspeakable things at the hands of a multitude of its doctors, whose chief idea of a proper regimen for the philosophic spirit has been to starve it upon a lowering diet of logic-chopped conundrums, to cut it off from all communication with real life and action, to seclude it in arid and inaccessible wastes whence there is an easy descent to the House of Hades, and by constant blood-letting to thrust it down into the gloomy limbo where a pallid horde of useless, half-hypostasised abstractions vainly essays to mimic the wealth and variety, the strength and beauty of reality. That philosophy has not perished out of the land under such treatment testifies with no uncertain voice to its divine destiny and to the glow of ambrosial fire that courses in its veins. We may expect, therefore, a marvellous

of the *a priori* necessities of thought in the one case, and the crude mass of chaotic experiences in the other. But from the standpoint of the τέλος what knowledge has become is truer, because more valuable, than what it has become out of.

recovery once it has by the might of postulation shaken off the twofold curse under which it has for so long laboured, the curse of intellectualism and the curse of a will that does not know itself, and in its self-diremption turns against itself, to postulate the conflicting and incongruous.

Intellectualism, to which it has already several times been necessary to refer in unappreciative terms, is naturally the besetting sin of philosophers, and a perennial idol of the academic theatre. Intellect being the distinguishing characteristic of the philosopher and the indispensable means of holding a mirror up to nature, he exhibits a constant tendency to substitute the part for the whole and to exalt it into the sole and only true reality. His infatuation is such that it seems to him to matter not one whit, that it proves patently and pitiably unequal to its *rôle*; that to maintain itself in the false position into which it has been forced, it has to devastate reality and call it truth; that it has to pervert the empty *schemata* of 'universal' abstractions from their legitimate *use* as *means* to classification, and erecting them into *ends*, to substitute them for the living reals; that even when it has been permitted to cut and carve the Real at its pleasure, and to impose on us two-dimensional images in lieu of the solid fact, it has in the end to confess that the details and individuality of the Real elude its grasp.

But when, for the sake of bolstering up an inhuman and incompetent, and impracticable intellectualism, an attempt is made to cut down the scope of philosophy to an attenuated shred which intellectualism can contemplate without dismay, when we are required to believe that philosophy need aim only at understanding,[1] and at understanding in general, without either condescending to the particular, or considering that which 'passeth all understanding,' it is high time to protest. It is the individual concrete experience in all its fulness which

[1] The thing is of course really impossible. A mere 'understanding' which excludes any aspect of the given reality is not even understanding in the end, and would only aggravate our sense of the burden of an unintelligible world. Cf. § 46.

every man worthy of the name wants philosophy to interpret for him; and a philosophy which fails to do this is for him false. Intellectualism is necessarily false because it only operates with conceptions, whose purpose and essential construction incapacitate them from accounting for the individuality from which they have abstracted. It reduces the philosopher to an impotent spectator of a *supra-rational* universe which he can interpret only as *irrational*.

And in this case the on-looker sees nothing of the game, because he sees a game which he does not understand, and cannot understand unless he has tried to play it. It is a false abstraction of intellectualism to divorce thinking from doing, and to imagine that we can think the world truly without acting in it rightly. But in reality this is quite impossible. 'Pure' thought which is not tested by action and correlated with experience, means nothing, and in the end turns out mere pseudo-thought. Genuine thinking must issue from and guide action, must remain immanent in the life in which it moves and has its being. Action, conversely, must not be opposed to thought, nor supposed to be effective without thought; it needs thought, and elaborates it; it is not a "red mist of doing" which obscures the truth, but the radiance which illumes it.

> In Lebensfluten, im Thatensturm,
> Wallt es auf und ab . . .
> So schafft es am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit
> Und wirket der *Menschheit* lebendiges Kleid.
>
> *Faust*, Act i. Scene 1 (with the necessary variations).

To trace, therefore, to their root in the postulations of personal need the arrogant pretensions of 'pure thought,' and thus to get rid of the haunting shadow of intellectualism, reopens the way to a philosophy which remains in touch with life, and strenuously participates in the solution of its problems.

§ 51. Such practical success in its completeness is, of course, a sufficiently remote contingency; but there

is a further reason for the expectation that it will be greatly facilitated by the proof of the volitional foundations of our intelligence. For it disposes also of another serious and inveterate source of philosophic confusion, and constant stimulus to philosophic despair, viz. the notion that philosophic difficulties arise out of the *incompetence of the reason*. Now there is some foundation for this notion. A certain class of philosophic problems, to wit, those which have no earthly concern with practical life (like, *e.g.* the Absolute and its habits), and so cannot be tested by action, are really *ultra vires* of an intelligence which was devised and developed to harmonise experience. But then we have all along contended that such problems are not real problems at all, but miasmatic exhalations of a false intellectualism, which has misconstrued its own nature and powers. Such problems are insoluble, because in the end they are unmeaning. But there are other cases where the intellect seems to fail us in questions of the most pressing practical importance. Hence so long as the dogma of the primacy of the intellect prevails, it seems hard to acquit the human reason of the charge of being infected with fundamental disabilities and insoluble antinomies. For is it not easy to draw up a formidable array of incompatible assertions and to provide each with a 'proof' in logically unexceptionable terms?

But of these 'difficulties' it now seems possible to propound a profounder explanation. The real root of the trouble may be found to lie in the will rather than in the reason, whose innocent amiability is always ready to provide an intellectual formulation for the most discordant aims and the most obscure desires. Let us, therefore, insist that before the reason is condemned untried, and philosophy is finally reduced to a trivial game which may amuse but can never really satisfy, it is necessary to inquire whether the 'antinomies' do not arise rather from volitional discord than from intellectual defect, whether the contradictions of the reason are not forced upon it by an indecision which knows not what

it wills, a division of the will which insists on willing incompatibles, or a lack of courage and endurance which fails to follow out what it wills.

That this should be the case need not arouse surprise. We are all sufficiently aware that systematic thinking, clearly conscious of its aim, is a somewhat infrequent phenomenon, and that in myriad ways intellectual confusion renders possible the co-existence of inconsistent doctrines in the same mind. But the intellectualist phrasing of our terminology renders us slow to recognise that *infirmity of purpose* is a no less rampant affliction, that numbers of really intelligent persons are addicted to the retention of incompatible desires, and either do not know what they will, or cannot 'make up their minds' to will consistently. Indeed it is probably true to say that 'confusion of will' is a better description of a very common psychic condition than 'confusion of thought,' and that most of what passes for the latter is more properly ascribed to the former. For all such volitional indecision, whereof a desire both to eat one's cake and to have it is by no means the least venial form, masks itself in intellectual vestments, and so contributes to cast doubt upon the faith that, with patience and proper treatment, our minds are adequate instruments to cope with the practical problems of our experience.

In illustration of this doctrine a single very common and glaring instance may, on the principle *exemplo ab uno disce omnes*, suffice. The insolubility of the 'mystery of evil' arises simply and solely out of the fact that people will neither abandon the practice of passing moral judgments on events, nor the dogmas which render all ethical valuation ultimate foolishness. As soon as they make up their distracted 'minds' (*wills*) which of the incompatible alternatives they will choose to abide by, whether they prefer to vindicate the supreme validity of moral distinctions, or the 'infinity of God' and the absolute 'unity of the universe,' the mystery disappears. For Evil visibly arises from certain limitations, performs certain functions, subserves certain purposes, is connected

with certain conditions, in the economy of the universe, all of which admit of being empirically determined or conjectured. All that is required, therefore, to bring the existence of Evil into accord with the postulated goodness of God is that we should conceive (as we easily can) a deity subject to the limitations, working under the conditions, aiming at the purposes, which we believe ourselves to have discovered. Similarly, if we deny that moral attributes can fitly be applied to the deity or the universe, Evil is simply a natural fact like any other. Of course, if we refuse to do either of these things, and insist on maintaining *both* these positions, we manufacture a mystery which is as insoluble as we have made it. It is insoluble because we *will not either* live in (or with) a non-moral universe, *or* give up indulging a perverted taste that revels in infinities. Thus it is not our 'reason' which is to blame, but our 'will.' For neither reason nor revelation compels us to frustrate the belief in God's goodness by that in His infinity.

And even in cases where a modicum of genuine intellectual confusion has entered into the composition of an antinomy of the reason, it is impossible to deny the complicity, and ultimate responsibility, of the 'will.' Intellectual confusion is most frequently the product of habitual thoughtlessness, carelessness, inattention and laziness, and even where it is due to sheer stupidity,[1] the obstinacy which adheres to an antinomy after its solution has been clearly displayed is a volitional quality—of a reprehensible kind.

We may infer then that there are no theoretically insoluble problems, or at all events that we have no right

[1] The moral valuation of stupidity is much too high; perhaps in consequence the prevalence of an intellectualism which, by divorcing knowledge and action, encourages people to bestow moral admiration upon what is intellectually contemptible. Stupidity is commonly supposed to have an intrinsic affinity with virtue, or at least to be a quality of which no man or woman need be morally ashamed. In reality, however, it may be questioned whether it is ever found without moral guilt, either in its possessors or in their social medium. Hence, as well as for the purpose of evincing the sincerity of their rejection of intellectualism, it would be well if philosophers devoted some of their surplus ingenuity to inverting their ancient paradox that 'vice is ignorance' and expounding in its stead the profounder and more salutary dictum that 'ignorance is vice.'

to assume so, but are methodologically bound to assume the opposite.[1]

§ 52. But, it may be urged, how does all this, even if true, help Philosophy? Is it not just as bad, nay worse, that men should hug intellectual contradictions to their bosoms, and cherish absurdities with an affectionate devotion, than that they should believe themselves their reluctant victims?

I think not, for three reasons which I will set down.

(1) The man who realises that he is inconsistent, deliberately and of malice prepense, can more easily be made to feel the responsibility for his mental condition than he who imagines that the very constitution of his mind brings him to his wretched pass. Moreover in most cases, the desires which attach him to one or other of the incompatible beliefs are not such as he really respects, and would easily faint from shame or wither with publicity.

(2) Confusion of will may be remedied, like confusion of thought, by attention and reconsideration. Many who have hitherto proceeded unchallenged in blissful ignorance of their motives, who have lacked a clear consciousness of what they will and why, once they had their attention called to it would set to work to clear away the confusion.

(3) There is hope from the young, even though the old generation should obstinately cling to its inveterate errors. Errors as a rule are not renounced; they die out. In this particular case the prospect is perhaps a little brighter than usual, because not all who now believe in their speculative impotence really enjoy their position. And the young are in a different case: their natural sympathies are rather with a philosophy that makes the blood run warm than with one that congeals the natural flow of thought by the chilling vacuity of its abstractions. And they have little or no inducement to adopt the gratuitous and uncomfortable perplexities of their seniors. And besides errors clearly seen to arise from perverse

[1] I am already inclined to deny that, despite the utmost efforts of sceptics, theologians, and Mr. Bradley, there exist any theoretical antinomies which can be pronounced insoluble in principle—unless indeed the 'eternal cussedness' of man be esteemed such.

attitudes of will are no longer so readily communicable as while they were disguised as theoretic dogmas. Nor should it be forgotten that intellectualism is intrinsically duller, less inspiring, and more difficult to follow than voluntarism, which appeals more directly to the hopefulness, courage and enterprise which are the precious heritage of youth.

So that on the whole we need not despair of Philosophy. Nay, we may gradually hope to see substituted for the disheartening and slothful twaddle (*pace* all the distinguished persons who have repeated it) about the infirmities of the human reason and its impotence to break through the adamantine barriers of an alien world, exhortations bidding us be of good cheer and go forth to seek, if we would find, urging us to act if we would know, and to learn if we would act, and assuring us that if insuperable limits exist to the development and progression of the human spirit, man has not as yet taken pains enough to discover them, while it is the part of a cur and a craven to assume them without need.

And so we must essay to weld together thought and deed, or rather, to resist the forces that insidiously dissever them and pit the intellect against the will in meaningless abstraction. For by a philosophy that seriously strives to comprehend the whole of experience, the unity of the agent is never forgotten in the multiplicity of his pursuits, but is emphatically affirmed in the principle of postulation, which pervades all theoretic activity, generates all axioms, initiates all experiment, and sustains all effort. For ever before the eyes of him whose wisdom *dares* to postulate will float, in clearer or obscurer outline, the beatific vision of that perfect harmony of all experience which he in all his strenuous struggles is striving to attain. And instead of immolating his whole life to the enervating sophism that it is all an 'appearance' to be transcended by an unattainable 'reality,' let him hold rather that there can be for him no reality but that to which he wins his way through and by means of the appearances which are its presage.

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III

THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM IN ITS RELATION TO PSYCHOLOGY

By W. R. Boyce Gibson

Part I. Freedom: A Defence and a Statement

1. Much of the perplexity attaching to the problem of Free-Will arises from the wide-spread belief that free-will and universal determinism are not necessarily incompatible.
2. In upholding this view the theory of 'soft' determinism, as it has been called by Prof. James, makes such concessions to the theory of 'hard' or mechanical determinism as render freedom logically impossible. Dr. Bosanquet and M. Fouillée, for instance, make concessions of this kind.
3. The crucial concession is made when soft determinism concedes that only matter in motion can be a determinant of material changes; for the consequence of this admission is a logical dilemma which compels the conceder to own that he must be either a materialist or a supporter of the conscious automaton theory.
4. To escape from this dilemma, we must either retract the concession which led to it, or show that the conclusions to which the concession logically drives us are all absurd.
5. The retracting of the concession is virtually a challenge to the mechanical determinist to prove his own statement instead of pressing us to accept it as axiomatic.
6. To this demand for verification the mechanical determinist answers by pointing to the growing fruitfulness of science wherever the proposition in question is accepted as a regulative principle. Such verification is, however, by no means complete, and cannot disprove the reality of effective psychical initiative.
7. The attempt to waive this demand for verification on the ground that the typically individual element involved in an act of free-will eludes by its very particularity the possibility of a scientific handling, cannot be regarded as valid.
8. The alternative way of escape from the original dilemma by showing the absurdity of its conclusions is the simplest so far as the positive indictment of absurdity is concerned. It is palpably absurd to deny that 'meaning' is a determinant of material changes.
9. The more difficult task consists in answering the counter-indictment of absurdity brought forward by Naturalism in self-defence. But we are

able to show : (α) that the principle of psychical initiative is in no way incompatible with the principle of the Conservation of Energy, properly understood ; and (β) that it does not violate the meaning of the causal concept, inasmuch as the idea of causal nexus does not presuppose either a measured equivalency or a homogeneity in nature between cause and effect, and the idea of psychical causality in particular is no more open to the charge of inconceivability than is the idea of causality through material agency.

10. If Freedom is not Soft Determinism, neither is it Indeterminism. The necessity for choosing definitely between these two rival theories arises only when the issue is restricted to the abstract consideration of some specific volitional act. It is therefore imperative to clearly define the issue at stake by insisting that freedom is the essence not only of self-conscious volitional activity but of consciousness itself, and that we cannot profitably discuss its possibility unless we start from the relation in which the conscious subject stands to its object within the unity of experience.

11. From this fundamental standpoint we can make a distinction between two forms of Psychology, only one of which is justified on the ground of its fundamental postulate in treating the Ego as a free agent ; the postulate in the one case being the deterministic assumption of the physical sciences, and in the other the assumption of a mutual independence of subject and object which is at one and the same time relative and real.

12. A criticism of Prof. James's indeterministic position shows that Indeterminism errs in three main ways : 1° in its restricted, abstract point of view, 2° in its recourse to the *Deus ex machina*, and 3° in its formalism.

PART II. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FIRST CAUSES : A FUNDAMENTAL DISTINCTION STATED AND APPLIED

1. STATEMENT OF THE DISTINCTION

13. It is customary with psychologists to look upon the deterministic assumption as a necessary postulate of scientific inquiry. This is true of what is known as Empirical Psychology, whose method is essentially inductive. But Psychology may be treated from another and more inward point of view as a Science of Free Agency, and as such accepts as its fundamental assumption a certain relation between subject and object, which guarantees the real though relative independence of the subject. This distinction is marked not only by a radical dissimilarity in the nature of the postulate, but by a correspondingly radical difference of method.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISTINCTION

14. A complete definition of Psychology should include a reference to the points of view from which it is to be studied. For the point of view determines the method, and the radical difference of method referred to above constitutes the best differentia between the two main forms of psychological treatment. The Inductive Method is not the only method for investigating the facts of the mental life. It is the method proper to the spectator's point of view. From the point of view of the experient himself, what is truly explanatory of his mental activity is not laws inductively reached, but final causes, ends of action, the synthetic principles through which the agent helps in creating his own destiny.

15. Consciousness has for long been regarded as essentially a synthesis, but its unity has been persistently conceived as a combining form rather than as a causal agency. It is only recently that Dr. Stout's con-

ception of the unity of consciousness as conative unity or unity of interest has brought the causal factor to the front.

3. Application of the Distinction

16. Ambiguities of a fundamental kind arise so soon as we ask ourselves what it is that we really mean when we call Psychology a Natural Science. Is it merely descriptive, or is it explanatory as well? Is it a mechanical science or a teleological science, or both? In what sense is it natural as opposed to normative? In what sense is it natural as opposed to metaphysical? The distinction already traced between the Inductive Psychology and the Psychology of First Causes will help us to unravel these ambiguities.

17. 1°. A discussion of the first difficulty shows us that Psychology is descriptive or explanatory according as it is studied from the spectator's point of view and by the Inductive Method, or from the inward point of view of the experient himself by the help of what may perhaps be called the Synthetic or Teleological Method.

18. 2°. As a solution of the second ambiguity, we see that as a science of first causes Psychology is primarily and essentially teleological in its method, but that as an inductive inquiry its method is essentially mechanical.

19. 3°. With regard to the relation in which Psychology stands to the Normative Sciences, it can be shown that the Psychology of first causes stands in a far more obvious and intimate relation to such a science as Logic or Ethics than does the purely empirical Psychology.

20. Finally, 4°, touching the relation in which Psychology stands to Metaphysics, we find that whilst Inductive Psychology stands to Metaphysics in precisely the same relation as do the physical sciences, it is otherwise with the Psychology of first causes. It can, in fact, be shown that the distinction between the inductive and the teleological Psychologies affords a basis for a corresponding distinction in the relation of Metaphysics to Psychology.

Part I. Freedom: A Defence and a Statement

§ 1. The question of free-will owes its obscurity far less to its own inherent difficulty than to the perplexities which have been thrown in its way by the theory of universal determinism. Though there is overwhelming positive evidence in favour of free-will, evidence at least as strong in its own sphere as that of the inertia of matter in the sphere of abstract mechanics, there is still in many quarters a strong disposition to hold it as an illusion because of the difficulty it finds in adjusting itself to the demands of this insatiable theory. The problem is moreover gratuitously obscured through a certain over-considerateness on the part of the free-willists that completely succeeds in defeating its own end. Determinism of the strictest mechanical kind—so the agreement

runs—shall have free sway over all the lower realm of matter in motion, provided only that the free subject be left to develop apart along spiritual lines according to its nature. This concession hard determinism smilingly accepts, and, on the strength of it, triumphs as assuredly as it does with all those schemata of psychophysical parallelism which are at bottom of its own making. It concerns us then to show that that soft determinism which fights freedom's battle whilst keeping aloof from the true fighting line and complacently yielding to the mechanical philosophy all its heart's desire, cannot possibly secure the freedom that it claims. We must insist on the fact that the only true champion of freedom is the hard-hitting anti-determinism that joins issue with mechanism along its own frontiers, stoutly maintaining its right to *reclaim* much of the ground that has been unlawfully appropriated by the mechanical philosophers.

§ 2. As an instance of what Prof. James so aptly calls "soft" determinism, we may take the attitude adopted by one of our foremost thinkers. "Why object," writes Dr. Bosanquet, "to the mind being conditioned by the causation or machinery of the sequence of bodily states? The important point is, what the thing actually is; *i.e.*, what is its nature, and in what does its organisation consist? We are quite accustomed to find that the things we value most have been able to develop through a system of mechanical causation,"[1] and he adds elsewhere: "If you think the whole universe is mechanical or brute matter, then we can understand your trying to keep a little mystic shrine within the individual soul, which may be sacred from intrusion and different from everything else—a monad without windows. But if you are accustomed to take the whole as spiritual, and to find that the more you look at it as a whole the more spiritual it is, then you do not need to play these little tricks in order to get a last refuge for freedom by shutting out the universe."[2]

Now in answer to this we must say, with all respect, three things:—(1) We do not object to the mind being

[1] *The Psychology of the Moral Self*, p. 124. [2] *Ibid.* p. 9.

conditioned by this mechanism, but object only to the indifference shown as to the amount or extent of the conditioning. The most exalted conception of my spiritual nature will be poor consolation if I have to recognise that my being here and not there in the body at any given instant is a fact determined entirely by mechanical considerations. (2) It is quite true that from the point of view of mind's *capacity* for freedom, its nature is the most important consideration, but whether such freedom is an illusion or not, depends entirely on whether it remains throughout this life of ours a mere capacity and nothing more, or an actual energy that does work after its own nature. But whether this is so or not depends again on whether the exigencies of mechanism really leave scope for it or not; a permanent possibility of freedom is of no avail if a rigorous mechanism does all the work in its own rigid way. From the point of view of the free-will controversy the positive nature of mind is therefore not the essential thing, but rather its relation to matter and the laws of matter. (3) The question cannot be decided from the watch-tower of spiritualistic monism, for such spiritualism has no basis, much less a superstructure, except in so far as it has won the ground it builds upon from the rapacity of a theory that claims the whole universe for its exclusive footing. And so long as that footing is held uncontested, no amount of spiritual complacency can avail anything.

M. Fouillée is another soft deterministic. Like Dr. Bosanquet and others of the same convictions he has in reserve a most valuable armoury to be used in freedom's cause when once freedom can find ground to stand upon and room to move in. "We are indeed children of the Cosmos," he says,[1] "yet, once brought forth and dowered with a brain, we possess stored up within us some of the conditions of change and movement which are found in Nature, a share in the causality of the universe, interpret that expression as you will; if anything is active in this world of ours, we too are active; if anything that is itself

[1] *La Psychologie des Idées-Forces*, Introduction, p. xxiv.

conditioned, conditions in its turn, we ourselves condition likewise. The line of connection between antecedent and consequent, whatever it may be, passes through us." But, we may ask, within a system of universal causality, however interpreted, what room is there for initiative? An initiative that enters, it doesn't matter how, into any closed system of antecedents and consequents is itself determined, not by itself but by the antecedents. That which conditions after being conditioned is simply transmitting, not initiating, some capacity to condition which originates, we must suppose, with some great far-off First Cause. If we are children of the Cosmos in this sense we are at best mere accumulators of potential spiritual energy which, at the prick of some antecedent, passes into the kinetic and actual forms. This conclusion is not at all modified by M. Fouillée's repeatedly emphasised distinction between mechanical and spiritual determinism. Both are determinisms, that is the main point, the one hard and rigid, the other soft and flexible. Thus we read in the second volume of the *Idées-Forces*: "If the facts of Psychology cannot be truly brought under the idea of mechanism, they stand in no such intractable relation to the idea of determinism, provided that by determinism we understand something far more complex and at the same time more flexible than the determinism of the philosophers, notably the associationists;"[1] and on another page of the same treatise, "Psychological determinism is doubtless much more flexible, indefinite, incalculable, than is physiological determinism, still, from our point of view, it is none the less a determinism."[2] Now this pliant conception of determinism resembles nothing so much as the easy indeterminism which M. Fouillée so resolutely opposes. Thus in his essay on the "Dilemma of Determinism," Prof. James writes as follows:—"Indeterminism says that the parts have a certain amount of *loose play* on one another," and again, "Indeterminism thus denies the world to be one *unbending* unit of fact";[3] and the

[1] Fouillée, *La Psychologie des Idées-Forces*, ii. p. 282. [2] *Ibid.* i. p. 267.
[3] James, *The Will to Believe and other Essays*, p. 150.

language undoubtedly suits the needs of Indeterminism much better than it can do those of Determinism, however soft and yielding.

Are we then after the example of James himself, to find refuge from our chafe against the flexibilities of free determinism in the shapeless arms of indeterminism? Such a reactionary movement is, as we shall try to point out later, needlessly heroic. Is it not possible, we ask, to cleave to the ancient name of Freedom without posing either as an indeterminist or as a determinist, rigid, soft, or free? We hold that it is certainly possible, and hope to justify the distinction in the sequel; meantime, with this end in view, we may return with advantage to the main line of our argument.

§ 3. The soft determinist, as already remarked, has a tendency to put matter in motion completely under the control of the mechanical philosopher, complacently believing that whatever conclusions the latter may legitimately come to, on his own ground, will undergo spiritual renewal and take on the meaning of liberty so soon as they come under the transfiguring spell of some higher category. Such complacency is, however, most inopportune, for the concession it so gracefully yields up is all that the mechanical theory needs or asks for; for in virtue of it the body of the free-minded philosopher down to its minutest tremors is at once most ruthlessly enslaved: he cannot even extend his generous hand without simply carrying out a predetermined necessity of action which the Laplacean calculator could have foreseen emerging at the birth of time from the original nebula.

Let us now press this issue more closely, and ask wherein this concession precisely consists. There is, I think, a difference of point of view here which is the cause of much confusion. The apologist of mind is very apt to think that the only reserve he need make when dealing with the mechanical philosopher is to point out that the matter in motion committed into the hands of the latter has a certain aspect which cannot in any way concern his physics. It is not only extended and inert

and so on, but it is knowable. The idealist, of the type we are considering, seems to imagine that, when considered afresh as knowledge, matter in motion will become duly penetrated with such spiritual meaning as will lift it entirely beyond the reach of the physicist. Meanwhile the living body pays the penalty of the spirit's transcendentalism, the physicist taking care of that in his own way. The mechanical philosopher, in other words, considers the concession from an entirely different point of view. As sole trustee of matter in motion he at once safeguards his interests by insisting on the doctrine that only matter in motion can determine in any way the movements of matter. This is how *he* understands the concession.

Here then is the crucial statement definitely stated: "Only matter in motion can be a determinant of material changes," and the psychologist must either allow its validity or at once reject it as insufficiently verified. We will suppose that he does the former, and on this assumption follow the concession into its various consequences.

The concession once made by the apologist of mental agency, his opponent, the naturalist, approaching him in Socratic fashion asks him whether he believes that mind determines the movements of matter. If the psychologist forgets himself sufficiently in the truth of things and answers in the affirmative, he is handed the following syllogism to reflect over :—

Whatever determines movements of matter is itself matter in motion.
Mind determines movements of matter.
∴ Mind is itself matter in motion.
Ergo: You are a materialist.

If this bait fails, however, the second is sure to succeed. For when the psychologist, repudiating all connection with materialism protests that he does not believe that mind is matter in motion, that, in fact, mind is *not* matter in motion, his opponent is at once able to answer him as follows :—You admit then the two following premises:

1. Whatever determines movements of matter is itself matter in motion.
2. Mind is not matter in motion;

you must therefore admit the following conclusion:

Mind does not determine the movements of matter.
Ergo: You are a supporter of the Conscious Automaton Theory.

Now there is no escaping from this cruel alternative, once the major premise has been conceded. This is shown on a big scale by the later history of Philosophy. The Barbara syllogism was tried first and accepted by Holbach, Lamettrie, Helvétius and the rest. It was the hey-day of Materialism. Gradually it became obvious that such materialism was ridiculous, consciousness being irreducible to a mode of motion. Camestres then came into favour, and psychophysical parallelism into vogue. Yes, and in our own day when so many find shelter under the shadow of Huxley and Avenarius, this second syllogism is still cherished as the germ and root of all true Philosophy.

§ 4. What then are we to do? One of two things. We must either push on or retrace our steps, for to stand where we are is to confess ourselves beaten. Either way is a way out. Formally, the push-ahead method is the better of the two; *i.e.*, if we can show that the conclusion of the second syllogism is quite as ridiculous as the conclusion of the first, that it is quite as absurd to reduce consciousness to complete inactivity as it is to reduce it to a calculable mode of motion, we shall make it impossible for our opponent to ferret out new middle terms in order to prove the same old conclusion in different ways, for the conclusion will have been disproved once and for all.[1]

[1] Moreover, we shall have the pleasure of meeting with Scepticism on the way, for wherever there is a formally valid syllogism with a conclusion proved to be materially false, and with premises asserted to be obvious, there will Scepticism be found. Scepticism in fact is none other than an attitude of philosophical sulks which persists in obstinately sticking to premises though all the conclusions to which they lead have had to be given up. "I have one conclusion in reserve," it says, "which becomes the more convincing the more

We have then two methods of procedure open to us, the push-ahead method of contradicting the conclusion of a syllogism and the falling-back method of retracting the admission that led to all the trouble. Let us consider more closely the logical relation between them.

§ 5. It is important in the first place to notice what is involved in the retracting of an admission. Such retraction simply means non-acceptance of the retracted statement as a proved statement; it does not imply any ability to disprove it even by a single instance. It says: "I see now that I was not justified in accepting that fateful major premise as obvious or proved, nor do I consider myself bound to accept it until you can completely verify it." On the other hand, the flat contradiction of the conclusion that mind does not determine material changes requires much more than this. A *direct* proof that in at least one instance or class of instances mind does actually determine the movements of matter would of course be the most satisfactory way of meeting the requirement. Such a direct proof is, however, out of the question since we have not yet discovered how it is that mind, *quâ* mind, can come into contact with matter at all. The assertion is, however, capable of a very stringent indirect proof. This indirect proof in its primitive and essential bearing, consists in a *reductio ad absurdum* of the conclusion we wish to contradict; and indeed the proposition that mind has its share in determining material changes is quite sufficiently established by the absurdities to which the contradictory assertion inevitably leads, as Dr. Ward in his Gifford Lectures has so ably shown.[1] Still, the indirect proof remains incomplete so long as it leaves unanswered certain objections that are at once raised you demolish all the others, for these serve as premises for it just in proportion as they are proved absurd." And this is the final syllogism :—

> A mode of reasoning according to which conclusions necessarily inferred from obvious premises are yet demonstrably absurd is not to be trusted.
> Now the process by which we human beings acquire Knowledge is just such a mode of reasoning.
> Therefore, Knowledge is not to be trusted.

[1] Cf. also Sigwart, *Logic*, Eng. trans., ii. pp. 388-393.

by the naturalist so soon as the result of the *reductio ad absurdum* proof is stated in the positive form, "Mind therefore, is a determinant of mental change."[1] We shall come across these by-and-by.

We proceed now to develop these two lines of defence:—

1. The retraction of the major;
2. The contradiction of the conclusion.

§ 6. 1. *The retraction of the major of the Naturalistic Syllogism.*—The retraction of the major is, as we have seen, equivalent to the request that the mechanical philosopher will please verify his statement before he presses us to accept it; and our main business is to see clearly what this demand for verification really involves. It is in the first place most essential to note that the demand must not be addressed to physical science as such. Physical science has no ears for such a question. If the physicist deigns to reply at all, he will say something of this kind. "You are laying your meddlesome hand on the great regulative principle which defines the nature and meaning of my science. You are asking me to verify the principle upon which all my verifications are based. I can no more fall in with your request than Euclid could have done had he been asked for a proof of his own axioms, or the great Stagirite himself, had a proof of his Principle of Contradiction been demanded of him." This language is not exaggerated. The physicist, *quâ* physicist, is perfectly justified in resenting as an impertinence the demand that he shall prove the principle which at every step of his work determines the direction of his inquiry. An illustration from Astronomical Science may help to make our meaning clear. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century certain puzzling irregularities were observed in the

[1] This contradiction of the conclusion indeed requires, as we have already hinted, more of the negator than the denial of the major premise itself involves; for in the latter case it is only necessary to show that something other than matter in motion can set matter in motion, whereas the denial of the conclusion requires the special proof that the movements of matter can be determined by *mind*.

movements of the planet Uranus. There were two conceivable ways of hypothetically explaining these irregularities. Either Uranus was being disturbed by the influence of matter in motion elsewhere, or by some volitional agency of more than human power. This second alternative was not in itself inconceivable. It was inadmissible only as a scientific explanation. It was an alternative that Astronomy could not possibly have admitted without *ipso facto* admitting that it had reached the limits of the science, *i.e.* without ceasing to be Astronomy. Suppose, however, that some incalculable demon had really been responsible for the perturbations. Could Astronomy, we ask, have ever found it out? By no means. It would be still puzzling its mighty intellect for a mechanical solution and meanwhile be blaming its telescopes, the irreflecting nature of the surface of the disturbing body, its extraordinary density that left it too small for visibility just there where it ought to have been, etc., etc., and so it would go puzzling on for ever, readjusting its hypotheses, even that of gravitation itself, if necessary, in order to render the phenomenon mechanically intelligible. It would, in fact, simply repeat over again in its improved modern way, those processes of adjusting and readjusting epicycles and excentrics which were forced by the same respect for postulates upon the bewildered observers of the Middle Ages.

So much for the physicist, *quâ* physicist, and his connection with the matter. Regulative principles, *quâ* regulative principles, must be left severely alone. They are principles for working with and not for discussing.

We must turn then to the philosopher in physics who in the capacity of naturalist first forced upon our attention the doctrine we are disputing. We must demand our verification from him. What then does the mechanical philosopher say by way of justifying the statement that he makes? He puts himself at the outset under the shadow of the physicists. "The physicist," we hear him say, "is of course quite right in having nothing to do with you. All the material sciences presuppose the non-

interference of mind. They stipulate in the first place that whatever is subjective in sensation or opinion shall be winnowed away by objective verification, and presuppose in the second place that such objective verification is not thwarted by the caprice of some incalculable demon or other untraceable volitional agency." "Now this silence on the part of Physics," he continues, "is the best proof possible of the real truth of its regulative principle: it is being perpetually verified by its fruits. Apart from the living body all moving matter has already been deanthropomorphised, while as regards the living body itself, our mechanical physiologists are busy deanthropomorphising that, and are proving successful beyond expectation. Indeed it is becoming abundantly clear that it is only the complexity of this material that now stands in their way, and that when that difficulty has been overcome, there will be nothing occult or undetermined, even in the most sprightly of men. The spins and rolls and intimate twists of a man's body will then be seen to be as mechanically unidetermined as are the motions of a spinning-top, a billiard ball, or a screw." Now there is only one answer to this, the simple reminder, namely, that uniform success in the application of any working principle to any subject-matter does not verify it in those special regions where it has not yet been applied, and that where great spiritual issues seem to depend on its not being universally applicable to the subject-matter in question there is every reason to cry out "unproven!" even though your opponent is seated triumphantly on the Milky Way and you are squeezed between the inner and the outer rinds of a man's brain. If the physiologist were ever able, in detail, to show that all the molecular movements in a living body were entirely determined by mechanical relations, then the idea of psychical guidance would be exploded. "Thereafter," as Dr. Ward puts it, "the idea of psychical guidance would not conflict with a theory, it would be refuted by facts."[1] But no such verification is forthcoming. Physiology has not shown that its

[1] *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 71.

subject-matter is coextensive with the sum-total of the molecular changes within the organism. As a science it is deanthropomorphic by definition; its assumptions and methods are mechanical, but the life it studies is not therefore deanthropomorphised. It has not yet proved that there are no eminent causes,[1] no body set in motion by mind. It only assumes that there are none, and works upon that assumption. Psychology must see that a methodological assumption is not stiffened into an axiom, and in the meantime rest content that its fundamental belief in the reality of effective psychical initiative and guidance is at least not disproved by physical science, since the latter has failed to prove that certain physical events within the living organism may not have other than physical conditions.

§ 7. This, I fancy, is the only way in which the advancing tide of matter can be restrained from that undue encroachment upon the frontier-shores of mind which, if demonstrably successful, would reduce Psychology to the level of a Science of pure Illusion. I can think of only one other suggestion for coping with the difficulty, as alluring as it is inadmissible. Why not state frankly, so it may be urged, that this demand for verification is a demand which Science by its very nature is precluded from satisfying? The movements wherein freedom finds expression, are they not of that highly individualised type which Science, on account of its general character, cannot possibly bring under its control? Does not Science fix and universalise whatsoever it touches, can it ever take into consideration at all motions which being under an individual's control, will never recur again under precisely the same conditions? And if this is the case, can we not conclude that Science on account of the uniform generality of its processes is for ever debarred from investigating the individualised movements of living bodies in motion, and hence for ever debarred from disproving the assertion of immediate experience, that mind *can* help in determining the movements of matter?

[1] Cf. Ward, *id.* ii. p. 73.

This specious plea that the real unknowable for Science is the individual element, and that this individual element is precisely what is involved in the assertion of free-will cannot be seriously entertained in this connection, for the simple reason that to hold the individual thus beyond the reach of Science is either to beg the whole question or to underestimate the possibilities of Science. The only individuality we can here be dealing with is the atomic individuality of matter in motion, and this being so, a judicious use of the scientific imagination will, I think, enable us to picture to ourselves how Science could grapple with the difficulty which such material individuality presents. We must imagine a wonderfully-devised instrument, a combination of biograph, stereoscope, and improved Röntgen apparatus, which could be so worked as to reproduce in its own mechanical way upon a screen all the motions of all the individual cells of a living body, and with it the environment with which the body happened to be in immediate contact during any continuous lapse of time. Let us further suppose that this instrument is helped out by a microscope that can indefinitely increase the spatial dimensions of things, and that an indefinitely slow motion in time is secured through an extraordinary perfection of the biograph section of the instrument, on a principle similar to that which now enables scientists to study at leisure, in its successive stages, the moment's history of the splash of a drop. The record once taken would be indefinitely reproducible, so that the objection as to the uniqueness of the momentary states of brain and body would cease to exist. The conditions under which the movements took place could always be renewed. The mechanical philosopher would then be able to follow in detail the movements of each individual cell, follow each remotest tremor to its source in the periphery or central organ, and so eventually have the chance of putting his regulative principle to its final test. Of course it would not be necessary, so far as verification of the point at issue is concerned, to study more than one typical instance, provided it were really typical. The individual

whose motions were thus being recorded would have to be taken when he was deliberately excercising his will with a knowledge of the issues involved.

We may consider ourselves then fully justified in pressing the mechanical philosopher for the verification of "that most unwarrantable assumption" that, whatever determines the movements of matter is itself matter in motion, and in building up our mental philosophies meanwhile, on the assumption that it will never be verified, and that a conscious effort of the mind can bear its associated body at any time in an absolutely unpredictable direction, and to an absolutely unforeseeable distance in that direction. The element of weakness involved in this attitude may be summed up in the fact that, from the standpoint of this argument, we are always exposed to the bare possibility of having to confess in some dim future age that our opponent's statement has been duly verified and must be accepted. Still the possibilities of such verification, in the problem under discussion, are so immeasurably remote that they may be treated as infinitesimals of an infra-logical order and be entirely neglected. Such neglect may moreover prove to be strictly justified by the results reached along the second line of procedure wherein we contradict the conclusion of the naturalistic syllogism by the help of a *reductio ad absurdum*, to which second defence we now proceed.

§ 8. 2. *The contradiction of the conclusion of the naturalistic syllogism by means of a* reductio ad absurdum.—The thesis that mind can not in any way determine material movements, that, as Dr. Sigwart puts it, "we stand in no other relation to our bodies than to the motion of the fixed stars"[1] is one of the most extraordinary paradoxes that the wit of man has ever propounded. We must try and show that it is also one of the most absurd. Its essential purport is, that all material changes that occur in the body or out of it, take place in entire indifference as to whether they chance to be accompanied by con-

[1] *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 391.

This specious plea that the real unknowable for Science is the individual element, and that this individual element is precisely what is involved in the assertion of free-will cannot be seriously entertained in this connection, for the simple reason that to hold the individual thus beyond the reach of Science is either to beg the whole question or to underestimate the possibilities of Science. The only individuality we can here be dealing with is the atomic individuality of matter in motion, and this being so, a judicious use of the scientific imagination will, I think, enable us to picture to ourselves how Science could grapple with the difficulty which such material individuality presents. We must imagine a wonderfully-devised instrument, a combination of biograph, stereoscope, and improved Röntgen apparatus, which could be so worked as to reproduce in its own mechanical way upon a screen all the motions of all the individual cells of a living body, and with it the environment with which the body happened to be in immediate contact during any continuous lapse of time. Let us further suppose that this instrument is helped out by a microscope that can indefinitely increase the spatial dimensions of things, and that an indefinitely slow motion in time is secured through an extraordinary perfection of the biograph section of the instrument, on a principle similar to that which now enables scientists to study at leisure, in its successive stages, the moment's history of the splash of a drop. The record once taken would be indefinitely reproducible, so that the objection as to the uniqueness of the momentary states of brain and body would cease to exist. The conditions under which the movements took place could always be renewed. The mechanical philosopher would then be able to follow in detail the movements of each individual cell, follow each remotest tremor to its source in the periphery or central organ, and so eventually have the chance of putting his regulative principle to its final test. Of course it would not be necessary, so far as verification of the point at issue is concerned, to study more than one typical instance, provided it were really typical. The individual

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sciousness or not. Consciousness is only an echo, a shadow, an epiphenomenon, an emanation from nowhere, that appears so soon as certain essential conditions are realised, *e.g.*, the sufficient nutrition of the various parts of the nervous system, and disappears with the disappearance of any one of these essential conditions, but neither its coming nor its staying nor its going concerns in any way anything but itself. Thus, according to the theory we are criticising, the movements of the pen with which these words are written and the written words themselves are, as movements and products of movement, perfectly independent of the instinct and the thought that find expression through them: they would have come to pass in precisely this way and no other had the last spark of consciousness flickered away countless ages ago; and the reader who interprets the printed type and lingers over some sentence, his whole statuesque attitude, whatever it be, was a foregone conclusion when the first atom in space gave its first little shiver.

To describe such paradoxes as these is really to explain them away: they shrivel off in their own light. Still it is best to seize even an absurdity by some tangible handle. Let us then replace the somewhat vague conception of "mind" by the much clearer one of "meaning," and ask ourselves whether any theory that makes meaning ineffectual in determining the movements of one's body can evade the charge of absurdity? Let us take two or three definite instances. Consider for a moment the import that the words "yes" and "no" have on certain critical occasions. "Yes" sets the young blood careering in all directions, "no" determines for the body the attitude typical of wounded pride, misery, or despair. Shall we say that this difference is simply the difference in organic reverberation consequent on the difference in tympanal flutter due to two such different air-vibrations as that set going by a nasal and that other set going by a sibilant? Or take another instance. A goes up to B as he leans with his back to the mantelpiece and tells him in French that his coat-

tails are on fire. The organic result is imperceptible. He repeats the statement in English and B's whole body instantaneously reacts. Or again you insult A, who happens to be deaf, and he smiles at you; you treat B to the same epithets, and he flings you them back in scorn. Meaning and Motion are then unquestionably connected in this sense that that which is not matter in motion, namely meaning, is yet an important determinant of material changes, and the theory that compels us to deny the connection in this sense is hopelessly absurd.

§ 9. There seems to be but one intelligible retort to this charge of absurdity. It takes the "tu quoque" form, "I'm mad, that's true, but so are you." This retort consists in bringing forward certain important objections to the statement that mind can determine material changes with the conviction that they are unanswerable, so that when the final reckoning is made the most formidable verdict for the critic of naturalism will be that thesis and antithesis are equally absurd, that it is just as impossible to maintain that mind can determine matter as it is to maintain that it cannot.

a. Let us start with the most frequent as well as the most superficial objection that is raised by Naturalism to the idea that mind can determine the movement of matter. The statement, it is urged, is incompatible with the great principle of the Conservation of Energy. Let us briefly examine this objection. It starts with assuming that mind or mental activity can only control matter on condition of introducing into or abstracting from the material system a certain supply of fresh energy or capacity for physical work, and this it is maintained is quite out of the question. And the reason given is simply this, that the amount of energy in the material universe is *constant.*

Now, in the first place this statement is far from being the record of an ascertained fact. What physicist has ever established an equation between the whole energy of the universe at any time, including the energies

of all the stars of heaven and all the cells of all living bodies, and its energy at a subsequent moment of time. No physicist, we may safely say, has ever dreamt of such an equation. The equation of constancy is in fact a most unjustifiable extension *in indefinitum* of the well-known equation of equivalence. The fallacy involved in this extension is picturesquely exposed by Dr. Ward. "Those who insist that the quantity of this energy in the universe *must* be constant seem to me," says Dr. Ward, "in the same position as one who should maintain that the quantity of water in a vast lake must be constant merely because the surface was always level, though he could never reach its shores nor fathom its depth." [1]

This remark leads us on at once to our second point, to wit, that the so-called principle of the constancy of energy has not even the hypothetical necessity of a regulative principle of Physics. What guides the physicist in forming his energy-equations is not the idea of the constancy of energy within the *universe*, but that of the balance of energy about any given change as fulcrum. The energy-level must remain constantly the same. There must be equivalence between the distribution of energy within the system under consideration and any subsequent redistribution of this energy within the system. The "constancy of energy" as a postulate of physics comes indeed to nothing more than this. "Given a finite, known quantity of physical energy—energy, that is, which has its mechanical equivalent—then if that energy be measured after any transformation, it must be precisely equivalent in amount to the original quantity." It is stipulated, in other words, that lost energy can always be found again provided the precise amount lost is known. There is no attempt to deal with the whole amount of energy in the universe at any time, a perfectly indefinite, incalculable quantum. The assumption of constancy is therefore not in any way the *physicist's* assumption. Just as the postulate

[1] *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 76.

of the indestructibility of matter is really nothing more than the balance of weights after a chemical change, so that of the indestructibility of energy is nothing more than the mathematical balance—in terms of mechanical equivalents—between the *capacity* for work within a certain closed system before a certain amount of *actual* work is done, and the *capacity* for work within the same closed system after the transformation has taken place. The first postulate has meaning only in so far as bodies have weight, the second only in so far as energies have their mechanical equivalent; in either case, to express the matter more generally and more accurately, the postulate has meaning only in so far as the possession of a common denominator enables it to be made.

Now when the constancy of energy is understood in this strictly economical and scientific sense, the interpretation cannot in any way demand the exclusion of mind from among the possible determinants of material changes, except as a convenient, or rather, necessary postulate for the working purposes of physics,—without making the assumption that the truth of a principle within a closed circle of material agency sufficiently justifies the inference that material things must *under all circumstances* form a circle closed on all sides.[1] Here again we have to defend the rights of spirit and spontaneity by insisting that Physical Science shall not make statements that stultify all spiritual life and make history ridiculous unless it be prepared to prove them to the hilt. The conservation of energy is quite incapable of any such proof, and Naturalism would do well to ponder over these words of Dr. Sigwart:—"Even if equivalence between all chemical events and mechanical motion, heat, electricity, etc., were fully established empirically, yet we could be certain of the truth of the principle only *within* the sphere in which its determinations were obtained, in those purely physical and chemical events of inorganic nature which we reduce to exact casual laws in such a way that every event may

[1] Cf. Sigwart, *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 387.

be calculated from its conditions." But in Psychology we have not the same footing. The possibility of stating the amount of potential energy stored up in a spermatozoon or a germ "is a hypothesis justified upon Methodological grounds, but not a proved proposition."[1]

The result of this discussion may be explicitly stated as follows. It has shown that the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy can offer no decisive objection to the theory that mind controls matter by actually increasing or diminishing the amount of energy in the universe. It was important that we should gain this concession from our opponents. We could indeed have evaded the whole argument had we been content to allow that mental control over matter can take effect without any energy being introduced into or withdrawn from the physical universe; for once we allow that mind while controlling and directing energy, is yet not a source of energy, we have no cause of dispute with the principle of Conservation. Energy being directionless or rudderless—to use Dr. Ward's expression—mind could then play the part of a rudder without interfering with the unconditional integrity of the principle in question. But such evasion, like many another, would have been worse than profitless. The concession, while it gave a handle to the mechanical philosopher for effective purposes of counter-thrust, avails the conceder nothing. For the principle of the Conservation of Momentum which takes direction of motion as well as velocity into account is ready to swallow up what the Conservation of Energy can spare. As soon as mind makes its modest attempt to direct the dance of the vital molecules without putting into its work any physical energy, contriving to push constantly at right angles to the direction of motion with the ideal accuracy of the mathematician, it is snapped up as trangressing the inviolable unideterminism of physical changes—and this is the root of the whole mechanical theory—according to which not only the energy but the direction of motion of every atom of matter is pre-

[1] *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 384.

determined from the very outset.[1] Energy is directionless not in the sense of drifting chancewise at every turn but in the sense of its being a function of velocity only, and not of this velocity's direction. It is directionless only when abstracted in thought from the matter that embodies it: the moving matter itself, as the physicist conceives it, moves eternally along in its predetermined courses, and its capacity for work goes with it. In a word there can be no loopholes in a system which is based on the postulate that there shall be none. "That a rigorous determination is deducible from the mechanical scheme is due to the fact that it has been put into the fundamental premises."[2]

β. A somewhat deeper-going objection to the theory of mind's control over matter suggests itself naturally at this point of our inquiry. Granted that it has been shown that as a statement of fact the objection grounded on the Conservation of Energy is baseless, and that it is equally impossible to maintain that the doctrine has any binding claim over our thought, it may yet be urged that inasmuch as our theory expresses a causal relation between mind and matter, it violates the meaning of the causal concept and is therefore inadmissible. But before we fall in with this objection let us look well at the causal chain with which our objector proposes to fetter us, and fix our attention, in particular, on its three main links. Each of these, we find, bears its own peculiar inscription. On the first we read that there must be quantitative equivalence between cause and effect; on the second that there must be qualitative likeness or homogeneity between cause and effect, and on the third that the connection between cause and effect must be scientifically conceivable. Now we propose to show that these conditions which the all-enslaving naturalist imposes on his conception of

[1] The same fundamental objection applies to Sigwart's own footnote suggestion (*Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 386) that it might be possible to maintain the hypothesis that the physical law of energy remained intact, and that only the conditions of the transition from active energy into potential, and *vice versa*, vary with relations to psychical states.

See also Petzoldt, *Einführung in die Philosophie der Reinen Erfahrung*, Leipsic, 1900, Part I. ch. i. especially p. 16.

[2] Dr. Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 67.

Causality, far from constituting the essential and obligatory definition of the causal concept, are not only unnecessary in themselves but implicitly recognised as unnecessary by Science herself.

The first link in this triple objection to the idea of a causal psychical control over matter consists essentially in the assertion that as we cannot *measure* psychical events as we can physical events, there is no possibility of a causal nexus between them. That we cannot measure psychical events as we can physical events needs no proving but, as Dr. Sigwart reminds us, "even in the region of Natural Science, many causal connections have been accepted as existing beyond doubt, and regarded as inductively proved, before their equations were known; that friction produces heat and that heat, through the expansion of steam, gives rise to motion, was ascertained before Mayer and Joule had found the equations which enabled them to calculate how much of the heat produced changes into motion, and how much is useless for the purposes of the steam-engine."[1] Similarly if we take the connection between an effort and the consequent muscular activity, noting how the work of the muscles increases with the amount of exertion, we see that though we cannot measure exactly the intensity of the effort made, we have still as much a right to consider as causal the connection between effort and muscular contraction as we had the original connection between friction and heat.

On the second link we have the hoary adage "like can only be produced by like." Dr. Ward has helped us to a better grasp of what this adage implies, by reviving the old Cartesian distinction between the *causa eminens* and the *causa formalis*. "Thus if one body is set in motion by another, the motion is produced *formaliter* in the Cartesian sense; but if a body were set in motion by mind, such motion would be produced *eminenter*."[2] Now this heterogeneity of nature which, in the case of mind and matter, is supposed by Naturalism to constitute a chasm

[1] *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 384.
[2] Dr. Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 73.

unspannable by any causal bridge, is characteristic not only of eminent but also of formal causes. Is it not Lotze who reminds us that the action between two material bodies, if we only look deep enough, is quite as mysterious as interaction of the eminent kind? To the physicist who looks no further than his figures there is of course all the difference in the world between the mathematically calculable character of the former, and the incalculable character of the latter, but this is a question that concerns merely the value of the causal idea for physical purposes, not the nature of the idea itself. Moreover, since the category of reciprocity has come into vogue, the unit of causal action is taken to be an interaction between two substances, forces, or factors, and the question as to the respective natures of *agens* and *patiens* regarded as irrelevant, from the point of view of causality, *agens* and *patiens* developing the interchange, each according to its own nature.

The third link introduces us to that mole-like creature, the "Inconceivable," whose grasp of facts is literally determined by the reach of its own nose. Now, when reach and grasp are co-extensive, it generally happens that the common horizon is determined by the limits of sense-perception. Thus when the brilliant imagination of Prof. James is baffled by the fact of mental activity, and he declares that mental activity is probably a mere "postulate" because no amount of introspection can possibly reveal it, he is simply identifying the inconceivable with the unintuitable. But if this unintuitable character of the action between mind and matter is the obstacle alluded to in the motto on the third link, it is an objection that applies in another and more fundamental way to all the connections which thought establishes. "It is no objection," writes Sigwart in a striking passage, "that we can form no intuitable picture of what takes place," for "what we can intuit is never more than the event and the linking of events, never the fact that the one is grounded by the other. For ordinary consciousness the connection between my will and the motion of

my arm is just as intuitable, *i.e.* just as firmly grounded in immediate experience and association, as the transmission of a shock from one billiard ball to another; it may be, indeed, that we should find the latter even less comprehensible, if we had not been previously familiar with our power of thrusting a body away by a voluntary movement of the hand."[1]

The objection of inconceivability may, however, bear, not on the unintuitable character of mind's action on matter, but on its intractability, on the fact that science is perfectly nonplussed by it. This may well be, but when so stated, the objection ceases to be directed at its former mark. It no longer urges that mental control over matter cannot be causal, on the ground that it is unintuitable and therefore inconceivable, but only lays stress on the fact that this admittedly causal relation is quite unanalysable. Indeed Dr. Ward himself brings forward this objection. "It must be candidly confessed," he says, "that, however much we insist on the fact that mind can direct and control inert mass, we are quite unable to analyse the process."[2] This is only too true. Had it been otherwise the objections of determinism would have admitted of being attacked *directly*, instead of by the indirect methods we were compelled to adopt.

If we may indulge the hope, at this point of our inquiry, that the objections of hard determinism have been sufficiently met, and that the concessions of soft determinism have been shown to yield more than the problem of Freedom can spare, we may, I think, turn with a good conscience to the task of clearly defining our relations with Indeterminism, or, as it is sometimes called, Libertarianism.

§ 10. Now the present writer must frankly confess that of the two objectors to mechanical determinism, the flexible determinist on the one hand, and the bold indeterminist on the other, he has the greater sympathy with the latter, and considers him the more valuable champion of

[1] *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 387.
[2] *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 85.

free-will, in so far at least as the ground-work of the problem is concerned. It seems impossible not to agree with Prof. James in saying that once a man's alleged spontaneity is completely at the mercy of its antecedents and concomitants it is logically indifferent what these determinants may be, whether of the crow-bar or the velvety type, whether they constitute a nexus of cranial motions and dispositions, or a nexus of motives, character, and circumstance. Whether the predetermination be physical or psychical the result is in both cases the same: the act of spirit could not have been other than it was.

It is under the heating influence of this conviction that Professor James throws the deterministic mechanism for guiding free-will completely overboard and commits himself heroically to the rudderless steersmanship of chance. "Determinism," he says—and under the title he includes the soft as well as the hard species—"denies the ambiguity of future volitions, because it affirms that nothing future can be ambiguous."[1] Indeterminism on the other hand affirms this ambiguity unequivocally, and gives it its true unequivocal name "Chance." "Indeterminate future volitions," we read, "mean chance"[2] "Whoever uses the word chance, instead of freedom," adds our author some pages further on, "squarely and resolutely gives up all pretence to control the things he says are free. . . . It is a word of impotence, and is therefore the only sincere word we can use, if, in granting freedom to certain things, we grant it honestly, and really risk the game. Any other word permits of quibbling, and lets us, after the fashion of the soft determinists, make a pretence of restoring the caged bird to liberty with one hand, while with the other we anxiously tie a string to its leg to make sure it does not get beyond our sight."

Now it is hard to feel ungratefully towards such refreshing similes as these, but the word "chance" is

[1] Essay on "The Dilemma of Determinism" in the vol. entitled *The Will to Believe and Other Essays*, p. 158.

[2] *Ibid.*

surely too desperate. Though under the magical touch of the great psychologist it puts on the beautiful appeal of a free gift—the idea of chance being at bottom, so we are told, exactly the same thing as the idea of gift,—even this cannot conceal its utter spiritual nakedness. In James's own words "it is a word of impotence," and seems to betoken a spirit not our own that works for chaos, a comet-like visitant that flaunts its own caprice in our bewildered faces rather than the essence of our own selves working for freedom and order.

But, comes the protest, is it not more impotent still to sit on the fence lamenting both the impotence of the spirit fettered by a flexible fate and the equally impotent condition of the spirit through which, as through a reed, the breath of Chance bloweth where it listeth, than it would be to trust oneself resolutely to the one issue or to the other? Yes, we answer, it surely is, so long as we are limited to a fictitious partition between two equally illogical alternatives, but we beg leave to protest against this arbitrary restriction both of our problem and of our preference.

And here we touch the heart of the whole matter: to wit, the narrowness of the issue as it is presented by the Indeterminist, and as it is characteristically accepted by the flexible determinist. The Indeterminist, like the Britisher, is king of his own castle, and woe to the combatant who fights the battles of Freedom within that breezy but treacherous enclosure. Of such a kind is the indeterministic challenge of Professor James. The professor chooses his own position. It is the position to which his physiological researches and mechanical proclivities have led him. "Future human volitions," he tells us, "are as a matter of fact the only ambiguous things we are tempted to believe in";[1] consequently we shall be greatly helping to clear up the real issue of this free-will controversy as well as greatly simplifying the whole discussion if we agree, as we must, to restrict our attention to some specific volitional act. "Both

[1] James, *Text-book of Psychology*, p. 155.

sides admit that a volition has occurred. The indeterminists say another volition might have occurred in its place: the determinists swear that nothing could possibly have occurred in its place."[1] Are you then a determinist or an indeterminist, for there is really no fence to sit on, and you must be one or the other?

Now we are prepared to urge that the triumph of the indeterminist is due solely to the willingness of his opponent to fight him on his own issue. Dr. Stout, for instance, seems to have fallen into this trap when in discussing the forming of a decision, he says: "At this point the vexed question of free-will, as it is called, arises. According to the libertarians, the decision, at least in some cases, involves the intervention of a new factor, not present in the previous process of deliberation, and not traceable to the constitution of the individual as determined by heredity or past experience. The opponents of the libertarians say that the decision is the natural outcome of conditions operating in the process of deliberation itself. There is, according to them, no new factor which abruptly emerges like a Jack-in-the-box in the moment of deciding."[2] So stated, we say, the issue is between Indeterminism and Soft Determinism, and we give our vote in favour of the Jack-in-the-box.

Fortunately, however, for the interests of freedom the issue is, even on psychological ground, a much wider one than the above quotation would lead one to suppose. Prof. James tells us that the consciousness of an alternative being also possible, a consciousness which characterises effortless volition as surely as it does free effort is, in the case of effortless volition, a most undoubted delusion (cf. *Text-Book of Psychology*, p. 456). We hold, on the contrary that it is as certainly not a delusion, and that freedom is the essence not only of self-conscious volitional activity but of consciousness itself, that it is a permanent attitude of the conscious subject, consciousness always implying a consciousness of the subject's relative in-

[1] James, *Text-book of Psychology*, p. 155.
[2] *Manual of Psychology*, p. 589.

dependence in relation to the object that conditions but does not necessarily regulate its activity.

§ 11. We have now reached the crux of our whole inquiry. The ground here is full of pitfalls and we must proceed as warily as possible. Our aim is to find a basis for freedom within the restricted province of Psychology itself. In order to do so we shall find it necessary, as we hope to point out in detail in the second part of this Essay, to draw a distinction between two radically different conceptions of the purport and meaning of Psychology, only one of which is qualified to discuss or even to consider the question of freedom. Each Psychology starts with its own characteristic statement as to the nature of the experience it proposes to examine. Each makes an assumption with regard to the nature of that experience, an assumption which determines the whole further course of the inquiry, and each inquiry further is stamped as specifically scientific—as opposed to philosophical or metaphysical—by the fact that it makes this assumption. The assumption in the one case is deterministic, the individual's experience being here considered as something to be explained independently of the personality of the experient himself, to be explained briefly by the so-called laws of psychical causality. The assumption in the other case must be non-deterministic and allow us to treat the individual's experience as the experience of a free agent. It is the assumption of a more inward Psychology than the other. It seeks to define the relation of the experient to that which he experiences in such a way as to safeguard at one and the same time both the unity of that experience and the relative independence of the free agent with respect to the conditioning elements in that experience. The assumption then of the more inward Psychology is that the relation between the experiencing subject and the objects which condition its experience is that of a duality in unity—the unity consisting in the permanent indissolubility of the relation, and the duality in that co-operative opposition of the two factors within the unity of

experience whereby a certain relative independence is secured to each.

With the metaphysical validity of this assumption we are not concerned. Taken as an ultimate metaphysical point of view it may or may not lead us to monads and other haunts of subjective idealism. This is, indeed, matter for further discussion, but it lies outside the limits of a psychological inquiry. What we are especially concerned to point out is that once we accept the assumption as a valid statement of the relation of the factors within immediate experience we *ipso facto* accept certain facts as fundamental for the Psychology based on that assumption: for to accept an assumption respecting the nature of real experience is just to *posit* as real whatever facts that assumption involves. In the present instance the two essential facts involved are—(1°) the indissoluble tie connecting the subjective and objective factors in experience—a tie such that the former can can have no experience save through the latter; and (2°) the relative independence of both factors, the freedom of the agent and the conditioning quality of the objects.

Accepting this assumption then as truly indicative of the fundamental character of all immediate experience, whether it be the experience of reflection—the so-called internal experience—or the experience of sense-perception —the so-called external experience,—we have freedom given us as a fact which can only be disputed by disputing the assumption. Freedom, then, as the fundamental fact of this more inward Psychology, is the relative independence of the subject which the duality of Subject and Object in the unity of Experience presupposes.

Now this relative independence means *real* independence, that kind of independence which has something of the nature of James's "original," "spiritual," "force," has its independence, in fact, without its indeterminism. What this independence means may be best gathered by considering its counterpart, the independence of the objective factor in the unity of Experience. This independence of the object — an independence hardly

sufficiently realised, perhaps, by Idealistic monism, though strongly emphasised by Dr. Stout—is shown in at least two ways :—

1°. By the way in which it *conditions* subjective activity at every turn of experience, in the sense of *limiting* it in various ways ;

2°. By the fact that the conquests of subjective activity are all so many *discoveries* of the nature and capabilities of that which conditions it, as well as of its own nature and capabilities. The *results* of such activity depend on the nature of the conditioning material which is being manipulated. The number of stones in a heap does not alter with the counting or the counters.

But to discuss in any detail the relative independence of object or subject would lead us too far. Our concern is just to point out that the problem of Freedom can only be seen aright from this inner, central point of view, a point of view present not only in volitional decisions, but in every act of mind whatsoever.

§ 12. We are now in a position to point out in conclusion, the precise relation in which we stand to Indeterminism. Indeterminism as represented by Professor James errs, in our opinion, in three main ways :—

1°. It sets the problem of Freedom from its own restricted, abstract point of view. It starts with the deterministic endeavour to eliminate freedom as far as possible from all the processes of mind. At last it reaches a crux, a residual psychic phenomenon, the phenomenon of effort, when Freedom must either be pressed out of the universe altogether, and Morality and Religion, to say nothing of Knowledge, become mere phantasms of feeling and fancy,—or else paraded as the absolutely undetermined, the absolutely unconditioned. Meanwhile the fundamental inner relation of all immediate experience is ignored. The *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of Indeterminism is that it first sets the problem of Freedom on a dualistic basis, and so can see no *tertium quid* between the absolutely unconditioned and the absolutely predeter-

mined. It can only offer us the choice between Fatalism and Chance. It can see no meaning in relative independence.

2°. Closely connected with this prime defect we have the cognate defect of the *Deus ex machina*. This drawing on the radically discontinuous is a weakness inherent in and common to all systems that are too abstract for their purpose or subject-matter. "If we are to understand the world as a whole," says Dr. Ward, "we must take it as a whole."[1] So if we want to understand immediate experience as a whole we must take it as a whole from the start, and in so doing, bear the possibility of freedom with us from the beginning. This is a point of fundamental importance, but need not be insisted on any further in the present connection.

3°. Closely connected again with this defect, is the fact that Indeterminism is mere Formalism. For it does not show us freedom as issuing out of the nature of anything, not even of the free subject himself, still less out of the fundamental character of immediate experience, but as starting suddenly upon the scene like an apparition at the Egyptian Hall.

And yet despite these three objections it may be urged against us in conclusion that the notion of relative independence, inasmuch as it connotes real independence, is shared alike by ourselves and the Indeterminists. This, it will be said, is the characteristic mark of Indeterminism, and the objections brought forward, are not so much objections to Indeterminism itself, as to a certain species of Indeterminism from which we choose to differ. If this rejoinder be made, if it be thought that the objections do not constitute points of difference radical enough to suggest a difference truly generic, this further discussion must be relegated to metaphysics. Psychology—at least the Psychology we have in view—accepts a relative yet real independence as fundamentally present in the central fact of immediate experience. It is for metaphysics to analyse this independence and to

[1] *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, ii. p. 87.

find out, if it can, how it can be or cannot be at one and the same time, both real and relative. That it cannot be indeterminate and is certainly relatively independent, and so free in the genuine sense of the word, remains meanwhile the working conviction of the Psychology of Immediate Experience.

PART II. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FIRST CAUSES: A FUNDAMENTAL DISTINCTION STATED AND APPLIED

§ 13. Perhaps one of the most suggestive facts in connection with the present state of Psychology, is the marked way in which it holds aloof from the problem of Freedom. "Psychology, like every other science," writes Höffding, "must be deterministic, that is to say, it must start from the assumption that the causal law holds good even in the life of the will, just as this law is assumed to be valid for the remaining conscious life and for material nature. If there are limits to this assumption, they will coincide with the limits to Psychology."[1] James speaks in a precisely similar manner though with less right, seeing that the form in which he states his theory of free effort brings it inevitably within the scope of psychological enquiry. The theory, as is well known, concerns simply "duration and intensity" of mental effort. "The question of fact in the free-will controversy," he writes, "is extremely simple. It relates solely to the amount of effort of attention which we can at any time put forth. Are the duration and intensity of this effort fixed functions of the object, or are they not?"[2] Still, despite this purely psychological turn which Professor James gives to the problem, he is quite decided that the question of free-will should be kept out of Psychology. "Psychology as a would-be 'science,' must, like every other science, *postulate* complete determinism in its facts, and abstract consequently from the effects of free-will even if such a force exists."[3] The free effort of Indeterminism is "an independent variable,"

[1] *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 345.
[2] James, *Text-Book of Psychology*, p. 456. [3] *Ibid.* p. 238.

and "wherever there are independent variables,[1] there science stops."[2] Hence, he adds, "So far as our volitions may be independent variables, a scientific Psychology must ignore that fact, and treat of them only so far as they are fixed functions."[3]

Now the question before us is the following:—Is this deterministic assumption a necessary postulate of scientific inquiry? Are we, as Psychologists, compelled to ignore the question of freedom? If so, what conceivable relation can there be between Psychology and the problem of Freedom? By way of answering this question, we propose to make a distinction between what we hold to be two radically different treatments of the Science of Psychology, each of which has its own separate problem and method of solving it. We propose to *state* this distinction as briefly and plainly as we can, to *develop* it, and lastly to *apply* it to the solution of certain fundamental confusions that still attach to the conception of Psychology as a Natural Science.

I. Statement of the Distinction

There is at present a fruitful, highly-developed, and rapidly self-differentiating Science usually known as Empirical Psychology. In its methods and aims it completely resembles the procedure of the physical Sciences. It shares the same postulate—that of a universal determinism—and hence also the same conception of what is to constitute a legitimate explanation. In so far as such method falls short of the ideal method of the physical model, such deficiency is due, not to any lack of faith in the efficacy of the method or the postulate,

[1] It would be a much truer use of language to say that Science cannot stand until it has acquired its independent variables, than to say that it must stop because it finds them. The calculus is built up upon the independent variable, as all considerations of velocity and acceleration presuppose time as the independent variable. Of course the independent variables of Mathematical Physics are only relatively independent, and indeed their independence is a mere mathematical fiction, but this difference in the two meanings of independent variable, the mathematical and the libertarian, helps to bring out the absoluteness of James's conception of free effort.

[2] James, *Text-Book of Psychology*, p. 455. [3] *Ibid.* p. 457.

but to the intractability of the subject-matter. Thus Dr. Sigwart, after laying down the inductive method as the ideal method even in Psychology—in default of the deductive—adds the following words:—"A process quite parallel to the induction of Natural Science is, however, opposed partly by the impossibility of measuring psychical phenomena, partly by the variability of psychical subjects in consequence of their development, and partly by the great differences between individuals which are to some extent connected with this development. Except therefore within the sphere of Psychophysics in the narrower sense, we cannot hope to establish exact general laws, by which the concrete temporal course of successive events in Consciousness would be determined on all sides in an unmistakable way."[1]

It is from the point of view of this purely Inductive Psychology that the deterministic assumption becomes a necessity of method. All Inductive Sciences presuppose determinism[2] for the very simple and general reason that they are concerned with the discovery of *laws*, *i.e.*, of uniformities descriptive of the actions and interactions of the material considered. Hence from the point of view of Empirical Psychology, Höffding is perfectly justified in stating that the limits of psychical determinism would mark the limits of Psychology.

But, as we have already pointed out in the first Part of this Essay, this purely inductive treatment of Psychology is not the only conceivable form of treatment, nor is it, indeed, that form of treatment which the peculiar subject-matter of Psychology essentially demands. There is the inner, vital, truly causal point of view, a point of view not only individualistic but inward, which, accepting as its fundamental assumption the duality of subject and object

[1] *Logic*, Eng. trans. ii. p. 374.

[2] Throughout this inquiry we conceive the Inductive Method specifically as a Method founded on the *Mechanical* postulate, the postulate of universal determinism. This postulate represents the demand which science makes for Mechanical Explanations, the test or standard of legitimate explanation. It is surely not untrue to affirm that if a suggested explanation violates this postulate of mechanical connection, Science will have none of it. The essential limitation of this method and its Postulate, we take to be this, *that it does not and cannot recognise explanation by final causes, in any genuine sense of the term.*

within the unity of experience, accepts with it the freedom or relative independence of the subject as its fundamental fact. The distinction, then, that we propose to make is that between the now well-established Inductive Psychology, on the one hand, and this inward Science of Free Agency on the other, and the first distinctive feature of difference between these two Psychologies we take to be this, that whilst the Science of Free Agency accepts the capacity for real freedom as its fundamental fact, the Inductive Psychology unreservedly accepts the deterministic assumption as its only possible working postulate. A second fundamental difference between the two treatments, a difference we cannot here do more than indicate, is to be found in the fact that whereas Inductive Psychology aims at discovering laws and combinations of laws, and at tracing uniformities within the psychical life, the newer—or the older—Psychology aims at showing how the free causal agency with which it is primarily concerned determines its own development. Were the term self-determination less ambiguous and difficult than it is, it might not be amiss to characterise this inward treatment of the psychical life as the Psychology of Self-Determination; but as this well-worn expression is somewhat too pliant for purposes of distinction, the more startling though by no means desperate name of "the Psychology of first causes" would, we think, be found to hit the point more firmly and more truly. We must leave the title to defend itself in the pages that follow, noting simply in the meantime that any difficulties which the term "first causes" may awaken are not for Psychology to solve. It is not the business of Psychology to make easy the task of Metaphysics. Its duty is to state its assumptions as to the nature of individual experience, accept as real the facts which that assumption necessitates, and then to push boldly forward with a sound conscience on its own lines. Let us now proceed to a more developed statement of what is assumed in a Psychology of first causes, and to a more definite treatment of its relation to Inductive Psychology.

2. Development of the Distinction

§ 14. I propose to start with the following definition. Psychology is the Science of Immediate Experience considered primarily from the point of view of the experient and only secondarily from the point of view of an external observer. This definition, it will be noticed, differs apparently from the customary definition of a Science in that it is so worded as to include not only the statement of the subject-matter of the science but also the point of view from which that subject-matter is to be regarded. The inclusion of point of view within a definition may seem unusual and require justification. It is unusual, no doubt, to define a Science in terms of its point of view but this is not because the statement of the point of view is unessential to the definition, but simply because it is always presupposed that the point of view is that of the external observer, of an observer, that is, whose method is conditioned by the decisive fact that he approaches his data from the outside. If Geology and Psychology had been the only two sciences ever studied we should have had to include within our definition of Geology the statement that the point of view taken throughout was exclusively that of the external observer.

The objection, however, will probably be raised that as the definition of a Science includes as a rule only the statement of its subject-matter, the additional reference to a point of view is, to say the least, gratuitous unless it can be shown that the subject-matter will be differently treated according as the one point of view or the other is taken; and the objection may be supported by the contention that whether the point of view taken be that of the experient or of the external observer, the mode of treatment will always remain the same, consisting, in short, in the method of Scientific Induction. Now this contention in so far as it insists on no element being admitted into the definition of a science which does not directly or indirectly serve to specify its subject-matter, must be accepted as valid, and it is only our conviction

that the view-point in this case *does* affect the treatment of the subject-matter that has determined its inclusion. The statement, however, that scientific induction is the only conceivable method which can do justice to the facts of the mental life is the very statement we are bent on disputing. Scientific Induction is a method born of the needs of the physical sciences, a method which aims at unifying the phenomena of a science within an organised system of laws of an essentially hypothetical character; it is in short a method that expresses not the necessary mode of activity of mind as such in the presence of a given subject-matter but its mode of procedure when treating this subject-matter from the point of view of the external observer whether in sense-perception or in introspection. For when we say that the point of view from which the experient considers his own immediate experience fundamentally determines the way in which that experience shall be treated, we have not mere Introspection, as such, in mind. Introspection, as the name implies, is no doubt a psychological point of view, a form of observation, and not, as it is often loosely called a "source" or a "method," but the method adopted in Introspection, may as assuredly be that of scientific induction as is the method adopted in Comparative Psychology. The point of view of the experient is in fact not to be identified with that of the inner spectator in Introspection, but is the point of view of one who, approaching his subject-matter from the inside, does not pass from disconnected data to uniformities that combine them, from the ceaseless flux of conscious states to the laws by which it is ordered, but from the very outset starts with the unities of mind, and from the vital interests and aims which express them. For the experient the real fundamentals are not fact and law but appetite and its satisfaction, or more specifically, to use Dr. Stout's own expression," the self-realisation of conscious purpose." In a word it is the essentially *vital* point of view. Let me give an illustration which I trust will not be pressed too far. The participators in an orchestral

concert may be divided into three classes, those who are outside the walls of the concert hall and have at best only the sounds at their disposal to symbolise what is going on within the walls, the ticket-holders inside who not only hear the sounds but see how they are being produced, and finally the performers themselves who are not only aware of the sounds and the processes that give them, but inwardly realise the hidden unities of purpose and interests of which all else is but the means or the expression. Thus at any moment of the performance the outer spectator, we will say, experiences a sound, the inner spectator in addition the workings to which the sound is due, and the performer himself the inspiration of of the musical purpose and interest which is the source and fountain-head of all that is happening.

No one can use the term "vital" nowadays without some word of apology or at least of explanation. Mine need only be brief. If life and mind are treated as coextensive, a hypothesis by no means disproved by the facts, and if life further is not treated as an impenetrable *tertium quid* between matter and mind, but merely as that which makes mental development possible and gives it its true inward quality, then the term "vital" fulfils a function which no other term can fulfil so well. That it should have no specific bearing on the explanations of the physiologist or biologist is due simply to the fact that it is purposely and profitably ignored by all investigators who do not need to consider mind as an influential factor, or to recognise any selective agency other than that of natural selection. But a science of immediate experience is in a different position, and psychologists who neglect the vital factor with all that it involves, are mere inner spectators, not experients, and can at best, like Wundt, reach the conception of mental development as that of a very complex system of reciprocal interactions between the parts of the process.

The spectators' points of view, with their methods of scientific induction, are of course as essential for the full development of psychological science as is the more vital

point of view, but they do not seize the subject at its heart. They miss the inner significance of mental development as a continuous acquisition of meanings and values, and they miss the true explanatory syntheses that dominate the development, finding them not in the fundamental factors or motives of that development but in laws of psychical or physical causality. Let us refer again to the case of Wundt. Wundt, like Fouillée, insists on the notion of Psychology as a science of immediate experience, as a science that starts, not from a number of generalised concepts, but from the actuality of the individual mind itself. But while insisting on the independent nature of psychical processes, he has not shown how this independence of nature gives proof of its independence in determining mental development, but he has treated the development analytically after a rigorously inductive fashion. The main problem which mental development offers to the psychologist, according to Wundt, is the discovery of the laws, the psychical laws, whereby its uniformities and connections may be seized; and these laws differ from the simpler laws of relation and combination that characterise psychical activity in complexity only, the interconnection with which they are concerned being of a more intricate and comprehensive kind. Thus instead of showing how development is determined through its own vital syntheses Wundt lays stress on certain fundamental forms which such determination takes. It is the spectator's and not the vital point of view.

It would indeed be a step in the direction of greater clearness were these so-called laws of mental development referred to not as "laws" but as "forms." The laws of "mental growth," "heterogeny of ends," and of "development towards opposites" as treated by Wundt, are they not rather descriptive forms affording a comprehensive bird's-eye view over the phenomena of mental development, than "causal laws of mental development"? The reason given for calling them "causal" laws is that they are found by a process of induction precisely similar to that employed in discovering the causal laws of Nature.

"Just as the nature of physical causality," says Wundt, "can be revealed to us only in the fundamental laws of Nature, so the only way we have of accounting for the characteristics of psychical causality is to abstract certain fundamental laws of psychical phenomena from the totality of psychical processes."

Now this reasoning is to my mind quite unsound. Granting that the nature of physical causality *can* be revealed to us only in the fundamental laws of Nature, we must find the reason for this in the fact that we are here dealing with that aspect of experience which shows us change and the occasions of change in abstraction from any inner activities that may be ultimately responsible for the change. But in inward experience what we are most intimately aware of is precisely the causal activity we abstract from when we view the object from the outside. Here we are not compelled by the nature of the case to be content with the revelation of cause in the observable form of law, but are at liberty to study causes at first hand, and the processes whereby they conspire to determine their own effects. It is not true then that the only way we have of accounting for the characteristics of psychical causality is to do as Wundt bids us,—standing over our inner experiences, as it were, with a view to threading them together as best we may, and calling the result "laws of psychical causality." We are prepared, on the contrary, to maintain that such laws are not laws of psychical causality at all, any more than the laws of change and interchange of inert masses are laws of physical causality. All causes are first causes. Otherwise they are mere effects within an endless chain of events, and have no determinative power whatsoever: they transmit, but do not determine. Where, as in abstract Physics we are restricted to the continuous changes of an energy that has neither beginning nor end, transforming itself indefinitely within the two endless continua of Space and Time, there is no place for causality, but only for varying effects due to varying relations of position, speed, etc., between the moving

masses. The world for Physics is one vast continuous effect taking the form of change, and its problem is to discover the laws not which regulate or determine, but according to which are regulated or determined, these never-ceasing changes.

It seems then a very questionable plan to import a *pis-aller* method of scientific procedure from a sphere where it seems the only one available, into another where causal methods in the genuine sense of the word are at once suggested by the facts themselves. Psychology will of course always require those methods that seek for law in default of cause, as so much of the material it takes in hand presents just those features which have compelled the physicist in his own sphere to restrict his attention to laws of change. But this is no reason why experience in what is most vital and essential to it should not be treated according to its own nature, instead of having its inwardly experienced development brought under the same forms of inductive procedure as are adopted when discussing the development of a nebula, say, into a system of suns and worlds. In the latter case we *can* discuss the development only from the outside, whereas in the case of self-experience, we have to get outside of ourselves before we can take up the spectator's point of view.

What then *is* this truly causal procedure proper to the vital view-point, and to the vital view-point only? If we are debarred from law are we not debarred from order as well, and even from intelligibility? In answer to this we may say in the first place that if law is defined as the means whereby order and intelligibility are introduced within the flow of events, the choice can only lie between law and nescience. But a synthesis that determines some drift of mental development is not a mere law descriptive of the process it both induces and directs but is the cause of that process in the only true sense of the word, that namely of a cause in action, working out its own ends in conformity with its own nature. The nature of a causal agency is one thing, laws which

describe the conditions under which that activity works quite another: the former may be best described as a synthetic principle that explains change, the latter as a description of some constant and general feature characteristic of this change. It would not be amiss, I think, were we to go a step farther than we went just now in advocating the distinction between "law" and "form," and suggest that the word principle be restricted to this strictly causal, synthetic point of view, so that all principles should be by definition principles of the nature and action of first causes and synthetic agencies. We should then be able to say of every principle, that it was not a law, or preferably, a form, and of every law that it was not a principle, but only the statement of some descriptive uniformity. We should talk then of the Form, or Law, or Theory, but not of the Principle, of Gravitation, we should talk of the principle of subjective selection, so far as by that we referred to a synthetic causal activity of Consciousness, but of the form, law, or theory of natural selection.

§ 15. That Consciousness is essentially a synthesis has been since Kant's day a widely accepted doctrine of Psychology,[1] but it plays even in the most modern text-books a formal rather than a causal *rôle*. The circumstances under which the problem arose, are no doubt largely responsible for this. It was set by Hume in such a way as to bring to the front the conception of the Unity of Consciousness as a combining form rather than as a causal agency. Either conception would have served to give that coherency to the flow of Consciousness which the problem required for its solution. But the former was given and has prevailed ever since. Let us consider Höffding's treatment of the Unity of Consciousness by way of illustration. "The peculiarity of the phenomena of Consciousness as contrasted with the subject-matter of the science of external nature," he says, ". . . is precisely that inner connection between the individual elements in virtue of which they apppear as belonging to one and

[1] Cf., *e.g.*, Höffding, *Outlines of Psychology*, pp. 47, 48, 49, 117, 138, 140.

the same subject."[1] This is, as Höffding himself confesses, a purely formal conception, but it is not therefore barren. For it is not only the fundamental form, but also the fundamental condition[2] or presupposition of conscious activity as we know it. Thus "it is only because one and the same self is active in all opposing elements that their mutual relation comes into Consciousness."[3] Moreover this formal character of the Unity of Consciousness which distinguishes it from all material connections is sufficient to disprove as a Psychological absurdity any attempt to combine two egos or Consciousnesses into one ego.[4] Finally this formal unity is not only the general form and presupposition of all conscious activity but runs like a connecting thread through all the specific forms which that activity takes. "The nature of the ego is manifested in the *combination* of the sensations, ideas, and feelings, and in the *forms* and *laws* of the combination."[5]

This formal conception of the Unity of Consciousness has no doubt its conveniences. It is economical and easily understood. But it is an abstract, non-psychological conception, and has proved quite as misleading as it has proved useful. Höffding, indeed, realises that there is a *real* aspect of the Unity of Consciousness as well as a formal aspect. "The form of Consciousness," he says, "is common to all conscious beings; *individuality* consists in the definite *content* which is embraced by the formal unity,"[6] consists essentially, in fact, in a dominant vital feeling;[7] but even as a feeling its function is simply that of keeping the concrete life of the individual together, a unifying, combining function. But it is at least not abstract, and that is a distinct gain to the psychological value of the conception.

Quite recently a definite attempt has been made to emphasise the causal aspect of this synthetic activity of Consciousness. I allude to Dr. Stout's conception of conative unity or unity of interest. It supplies a triple

[1] Höffding, *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 47. [2] *Ibid.* p. 136.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 140; cf. also p. 117.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 138. [5] *Ibid.* p. 136. [6] *Ibid.* p. 139, cf. also p. 49.
[7] So Wundt, cf. *Outlines of Psychology*, Eng. trans. p. 221.

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need. In the 1° place it is a real vital unity, consisting not in a mere feeling but containing all the elements that enter into a complete attitude of Consciousness: appetition, feeling-tone, and attentive or cognitive aspect; (2°) it is a causal agency, not a mere *combining* activity; (3°) it is a workable conception of the synthetic unity of Consciousness.

Now I do not propose to develop in any way these three notable contributions to the science of Psychology. There is, however, one remark I should wish to make. Readers of the "Manual" will, I think, discover that though there is no explicit recognition in those pages of the distinction we have been attempting to draw, that the distinction nevertheless exists, and is stated if not explicitly, yet in principle. For Dr. Stout maintains that the central interest of Psychology consists in the study of mental development as the self-realisation of conscious purpose in "the study of conscious endeavour, *as a factor in its own fulfilment*"[1] and shows how continuity of interest and of attention is the principle which, when articulately developed under the impetus given by objects, is the determinative explanatory principle in both reproduction and association. Moreover, and this seems most important, Dr. Stout, following up Mr. Bradley's famous distinction in the opening pages of his Principles of Logic, has presented this mental development to us as consisting essentially in acquisition of meaning. The stages in mental development are represented as "stages in the evolution of meaning towards definiteness and explicitness."[2] Now there seems ground for maintaining that just in so far as mental development is presented in the light of an evolution of meanings and values, it is presented from the truly inward point of view and from the point of view which can alone furnish a living and a suitable psychological basis for Ethics, Æsthetics, and the Theory

[1] This phrase is taken out of a course of lectures by Dr. Stout on the *Fundamentals of Psychology*. The italics are mine.

[2] Dr. Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, p. 89.

of Knowledge in their inward aspects. The attempt made in this Essay towards establishing a certain fundamental distinction of psychological treatment, may accordingly be viewed as an addendum to the Manual, for it was suggested by reflecting on the necessary implications of the Theory of Conation as elaborated in that important work.

We come now to our last point. We have stated and developed under such inspiration as we have already acknowledged what we believe to be a fundamental and important distinction. It remains for us to show that the distinction is not an arbitrary, manufactured product, but a fruitful and explanatory principle.

3. Application of the Distinction

§ 16. Psychology, we are told, is a Natural Science. Let us examine this commonplace statement and see whether it is after all quite so satisfactory and free from ambiguity as at first sight it appears.

It is generally asserted or understood, in the first place that, as a Natural Science, Psychology must be concerned both with describing and explaining the subject-matter of which it treats, but when we come to close quarters with this distinction between the descriptive and the explanatory functions of the science we meet with strange inconsequences that leave us with a mind all in confusion. Thus we find Prof. James starting with the conception of Psychology as a Natural Science with an explanatory function to fulfil,[1] and closing with the conviction that it is after all only a Natural History[2] and cannot do more than describe the states of Consciousness it set out to explain; whilst, on the other hand, Dr. Stout himself, after telling us blankly at the outset that Psychology "has only to do with the natural history of subjective processes as they occur in time,"[3] heroically proceeds to furnish us with the very explanatory agencies that are needed to bring true science into

[1] James, *Text-book of Psychology*, p. 1. [2] *Ibid.* p. 468.
[3] Stout, *Manual of Psychology*, p. 6.

history and justify the claim of Psychology to pose as an explanatory science.

Here then is a first ambiguity. In stating that Psychology is a Natural Science, do we mean that it is merely descriptive, or explanatory as well,—a mere Natural History or a genuine Science?

A second ambiguity the issues of which are closely involved with those of the first arises from the fact that to many minds "science" and "mechanical science" are synonymous terms. In calling Psychology a Natural Science these mechanists hold in reserve the latent conviction that it is a Science only so far as Cerebral Physiology is able to afford it firm mechanical support. To such the notion of a teleological science is a *contradictio in adjecto* if it denotes a return to what they conceive to be the superstition of final causes; but is otherwise harmless and even useful in so far as it serves merely to describe a feature of psychical phenomena that can be explained, or rather explained away, by natural selection. Thus Prof. James is able to preface his conviction that Psychology is now "on the materialistic tack"[1] and must be allowed full headway in its mechanically directed course, with an approval of another "gradually growing conviction" of modern thought, that "mental life is primarily teleological."[2]

Here then is a second ambiguity. In stating that Psychology is a Natural Science, do we mean that it is a *mechanical* science, a *teleological* science, or both?

Now in addition to these two positive sources of ambiguity due to our uncertainty as to what we *do* mean when we talk of Psychology as a Natural Science, we are met by others equally confusing so soon as we attempt to decide what we do *not* mean when we make that same assertion. Of these the two most important are those associated—(1°), with the distinction between "natural" and "normative"; (2°) with the distinction between "natural" and "metaphysical." Let us briefly consider in turn each of these familiar distinctions. In

[1] James, *Text-book of Psychology*, p. 3. [2] *Ibid.* p. 4.

the first place we must draw attention to the fact that either distinction can be made as obvious as we please, and be so stated as to give us no more trouble, provided we are content to follow a line of treatment by which clear dualisms can always be extracted from the most entangled dualities. This consists briefly in abstracting the respective *differentiæ* of the two members of the antithesis for the purposes of distinction, and abstracting away all else so as to leave a clear space intervening for the exclusive use of the mind in its to-and-fro passages in between. Thus, to take the first antithesis, all chance of mutual interference between the opposing terms is removed by stating that natural science deals with the "mere is," and normative discipline with the "should be" or the "ought," provided the further stipulation is made that the "is" is a mere question of events or occurrences, obeying fixed laws of their own in complete indifference to the ends towards which they may be diverted by a regulative discipline. Thus the machinery of association is paraded as a mere "is" which thinking can freely regulate in conformity with ideals of which the machinery gives no hint. A difficulty arises, however, when we seek to render intelligible this relation between the "is" and the "ought" in conformity with the principles of Continuity.[1] The attempt is then made as a rule to show that the ideal is immanent in the actual, and only needs a little elaboration to fulfil a true regulative office; unfortunately the processes whereby the actual assimilates and digests the ideal are not usually well-considered, so that the device comes to nothing more than the trick of conveying the ideal into the actual, and then withdrawing it when needed, with all the deftness and complacency of a prestidigitist. Indeed it must be so unless the "is" is otherwise understood than as a serious of "occurrences" or mere "events in time." Hence this distinction on closer view reveals ambiguities and uncertainties of a fundamental

[1] Cf. the blank amazement of Professor Liebmann in that most delightful chapter "Gehirn und Geist" of his book *Zur Analysis der Wirklichkeit*.

kind. The same must be said of the relation between the natural and the metaphysical. Whilst it is true that no science whose assumptions are abstract in this sense, that they are not assumptions as to the nature of Reality, can resent as an interference the metaphysician's criticism of this assumption in the light of his more ultimate conceptions, it is quite otherwise when, as in the case of the more inward treatment of Psychology, the initial assumptions that are made *are* assumptions as to the nature of Reality—from the point of view, at any-rate, of individual experience. The question must then be asked: "Is a Psychology that makes assumptions, or postulates as to the nature of Reality, to be regarded as a natural or as a metaphysical science?" and together with it this further question: "Is Metaphysics then a Science without assumptions, and if not, how are we to distinguish between a Psychology that makes assumptions as to the nature of Reality and a Metaphysics that does precisely the same thing?"

These existing ambiguities now stated, we proceed to show to what extent they can be unravelled by the help of the distinction between the Inductive Psychology and the Psychology of first causes. We have four questions to ask and answer:—

1°. Can Psychology justly lay claim to be an explanatory science or is its function merely descriptive?

2°. Is Psychology a mechanical or a teleological science?

3°. In what relation does Psychology stand to the normative sciences?

4°. In what relation does Psychology stand to Metaphysics?

1°. Is Psychology a Descriptive or an Explanatory Science?

§ 17. In answer to the first query we would unhesitatingly maintain that Inductive Psychology, in so far, at any rate as it is Psychology and not a schematised Physiology,

is a merely descriptive Science. From this point of view the effort of Inductive Psychology as represented by Prof. James and in a more systematic though less convincing manner by the school of Avenarius, to make cerebral laws responsible for the explanation of psychical effects, is readily intelligible; for it is, so far as I can see, the only quasi-explanatory outlet for the exclusive devotee of Inductive Psychology. The line of reasoning which these cerebral explicants take is put very clearly by Mr. Petzoldt in his recently published *Introduction to the Philosophy of Pure Experience.* It consists essentially in the following argument:—The only intelligible principle of explanation is that founded on the thoroughgoing unideterminism of events. Such unideterminism is not anywhere traceable within the mental sphere. Mental processes must therefore either remain permanently inexplicable or be explained through their connections with material processes, for these alone proceed unideterminately. As all known facts agree in showing that the only material processes in immediate relation with psychical processes are the processes of the brain, it follows irresistibly that if there is to be a science of mind at all, psychical processes must be conceived of as the dependent concomitants of brain-processes and receive their unideterminateness through their connection with these. And the conclusion runs: "If this is not so, then mental science is a mere descriptive phantasmagoria, in plainer words an illusion."

Here we have the clear statement of the pass to which we are reduced when we insist on the psychical life being regulated like the object-matter of the physicist on the lines of a strictly mechanical unideterminateness. We are obliged to make the reality of immediate experience dependent for its intelligibility on physiological sequences of a more or less manufactured and fictitious kind, for as Lewes himself puts it—and the remark is abundantly verified in the character of the Avenarian method—much that passes as a physiological explanation of mental facts is simply the translation of those facts in terms of a

physiology that is merely hypothetical.[1] Still if a hypothetical physiological scheme is the only form that psychical explanation can ultimately take, it must be welcomed as supplying at least provisionally a much-felt want, and we who accept it must reconcile ourselves as best we may to the absurdities, the dualisms, and the scepticisms which are its inseparable concomitants.

I cannot see, however, that we are under any necessity to trace out our explanations of psychical processes by the aid of the ideal scalpel of the Avenarians. Human intelligence having got the idea of causality from the action of the relatively independent agencies in immediate experience, introduces it into its study of external phenomena under the name of Force. It abandons this concept, however, as superfluous so soon as it is able to replace it by the more systematic conception of Law, of unidetermining law. This twice-refined product of shadowy thought is then reintroduced, a ghost of a ghost, into its original home. It has no longer anything psychical about it, but is a breathless, mechanical, and purely fictitious creature; yet its plain duty, we are told, is to oust from the mental life all causal agencies that are not of its own rarefied kind, and to exercise full sway over the soulless dregs or "states" of consciousness that persist even after all original causal agency has been withdrawn. One can hardly help thinking that this unidetermining fiction from the ideal realm of abstract physics resents even the presence of these submissive fragments of mentality, and would fain have a free field in which to recreate consciousness afresh after its own heart. Perhaps the post-Avenarians will bring us to this ere long.

These remarks are of course not aimed at the inductive treatment of psychical processes and states, which is as essential and important as it is limitedly descriptive, but

[1] Quoted by Alfred Fouillée, *Psychologie des Idées-Forces*, i. p. 252; cf. also James, *Text-Book of Psychology*, p. 278:—"Truly the day is distant when physiologists shall actually trace from cell-group to cell-group the irradiations which we have hypothetically invoked. Probably it will never arrive. The schematism we have used is, moreover, taken immediately from the analysis of objects into their elementary parts, and only extended by analogy to the brain."

only at such pseudo-Psychology as goes to its own physiological fictions for causal explanations in the spirit of the savage who seeks his counsel from the idols of his own making. Such flimsy usurpation of the true explanatory function of free spiritual agency has surely been tolerated all too long, seeing how wholly gratuitous it undoubtedly is. For in actual concrete experience, we are presented at first hand with a living causal agency, continuously effective in mental development, to ignore whose effective presence is to ignore the whole inwardness and power of the psychical life, to treat it as something husk and hollow and as cleanly devitalised as abstractive power can make it.

Inductive Psychology with its deterministic assumption *necessarily* ignores this vital factor as the regulating agent in mental development. In doing so it excludes the natural causal factor and is logically doomed to a purely descriptive function. Inductive Psychology we repeat, is necessarily and exclusively descriptive. The so-called causal connections between stimulus and sensation, can be causal only so far as causal agency is recognised in the material world as a real inherent factor, and the idea of " force " as no longer a mere subjectively valid concept. But such a recognition of the rights of force in the material world implies a recognition of the relative independence of the objective factor in immediate experience, and this again implies a recognition of the relative independence of the subject within the unity of that experience, a recognition, that is, of a certain free, causal agency as an effective factor in mental development. The original free-will and force, its correlate, depend together. Once free psychic agency is ignored by the necessities of a deterministic science, the correlate force has no longer any right of presence but must sink to the rank of a mere convenient figment of the physicist's speech to give way eventually, first to energy and then to the pure law of a pure unideterminism.

It is only then in its truly inward aspect that Psychology is a genuine explanatory science. For it

deals there with free agency as the central, essential factor in its own development, following the causal principle as it were into all its effects and watching how out of such effective work eventually grow the great ideal structures of the Self and the World as systems of meaning and value. Psychology, then, we may say in conclusion, is descriptive or explanatory according as it is an inductive Psychology or a Psychology of first causes and free agencies, a Psychology studied from the outside or a Psychology studied from the inward point of view of the experient himself.

2°. Is Psychology a Mechanical or a Teleological Science?

§ 18. We have seen that as a purely inductive science Psychology abstracts unreservedly from the relative independence of the subject in immediate experience. With the abstraction of this relative independence goes all possibility of teleological explanation in Psychology together with any and every other kind of explanation. All that remains is the possibility of describing after the mechanical pattern processes of a teleological kind. And this is what inductive Psychology actually does in dealing with mental development. But a science, as we would say, is mechanical or teleological according as its method is mechanical or teleological, hence Inductive Psychology is essentially a mechanical science, inasmuch as its whole method of procedure is modelled on that of the mechanical sciences. It may take cognizance of the adjustments of inward to outer relations, of adaptations of means to ends, and the like, but its sole aim therein is to bring these adjustments and adaptations within some descriptive scheme of laws. In short, it seems impossible to admit as teleological a science that treats teleological data on the mechanical model, the model, that is, of a descriptive treatment whose goal is the discovery of law and uniformity everywhere and in everything. It would

be just as reasonable to talk of Physiology as a teleological science.

As a science of first causes, however, the Psychology of Immediate Concrete Experience is essentially teleological. For its aim is to show how causes whose freedom can find effect only in the selection of ends and the choice of means to realise them, contrive to realise their ends in virtue of a persistence of interest that continues active despite all temporary interruption, until the ends are reached. It is thus not only a science of first causes but of final causes, and its method is that which is natural to such a science, that, namely, of making the fundamental principles of finality centrally responsible for the work of explanation. We should accordingly be prepared to maintain that as a science of first causes Psychology is primarily and essentially teleological in its method, but that as an inductive inquiry, its method is mechanical and descriptive, and indeed so much so that the attempt to take on explanatory functions inevitably leads, as the history of the subject has shown, to the introduction into Psychology of a purely mechanical scheme of explanation, such as that of the physiological vital series of Avenarius.

3°. In what Relation does Psychology stand to the Normative Sciences?

§ 19. The Psychology of the will to think correctly, or of the will to act rightly, or of the will to feel deeply the inspiration of beauty is in each of these three directions of volition the science of a dominating fundamental interest. Thus as Dr. Sigwart reminds us in the Introduction to his *Logic*, the function of Logic as a normative discipline is to regulate that region of our voluntary thinking, and that region only, which is governed by the desire to think the truth. A psychological analysis of the will to think correctly implies, then, an analysis of a certain specific unity of interest, interest in the true form or structure of knowledge. Hence that Psychology which takes as its

fundamental problem the question as to how the mental life is built up by the progressive differentiations and interjunctions of such unities of conative effort, how, in a word, unity of meaning is developed through unity and continuity of interest in an object appears to me to stand in a peculiarly intimate relation to these standard disciplines, and that type of analysis which takes the form of showing how unity of purpose is the central factor in its own development, treating such unity of purpose as the persistence of a free agent in its own self-directed ends is the form of analysis naturally suited to bear the superstructure of a normative discipline.

Inductive Psychology, on the other hand, appears to supply loose material rather than a psychological basis for normative science. It deals with the "is" of the psychical life as a succession of events or occurrences and seeks the uniformity of law amid the flux of mental change. It thus seizes the mental life, not as a "self-realising" process, to use a hazardous but expressive term, but rather as a product of the reign of law, to be analysed out into laws and their combinations. Failing to seize the inner meaning of self-development, it fails *ipso facto* in adapting its analysis to the inner requirements of a regulative elaboration. Whereas the more inward Psychology, through an analysis which ultimately takes the form of a synthetic development of final causes, is throughout concerned with a striving after what is better, with an "is-ought" so to speak, Inductive Psychology is only incidentally concerned with such a striving, and even when busied with it, investigates its laws of development from the same external point of view which Physics adopts in investigating the facts of external nature. A gap is thus left between the psychological analysis on the one hand, and the elaborative treatment on the other, which gives to the normative superstructure the look of something shaped out of alien material, rather than of a growth out of what is naturally akin to it.

It therefore seems to me that the continuity between Psychology and the regulative disciplines can be truly

secured only when Psychology is considered from the point of view of the experient, as the Psychology of the first and final cause.

4°. In what Relation does Psychology stand to Metaphysics?

§ 20. Inductive Psychology stands to Metaphysics in precisely the same relation as the physical sciences. Physical Science abstracts at the start from all considerations that are indifferent to it, and makes just such assumptions with regard to its subject-matter as it requires for its own best development. These postponed considerations and conventional assumptions are then taken up by the metaphysician, and furnish food for his reflection. In such relation there seems no room for ambiguity. Inductive Psychology has its abstract, limited point of view, *e.g.*, its deterministic assumption, and is therefore amenable to metaphysical control in precisely the same sense as in the science of mechanics. But the Psychology of first causes is not so simply related to Metaphysics. For it has this in common with Metaphysical inquiry that both it and Metaphysics are equally interested in the fundamental assumption as to the nature of Experience upon which assumption its whole superstructure is based. The two sciences seem to meet in the Theory of Knowledge, or to use a truer and more inclusive expression, in the Theory of Experience. Is this more inward Psychology, then, to be classed as an offspring of Metaphysical Inquiry, or as more closely related to the Natural Science of Inductive Psychology?

In our opinion it is still a scientific Psychology and not a Metaphysics. For (1°), though concerned with its own assumptions it is not concerned with the assumptions of any other Science, whereas Metaphysics is concerned with assumptions in general; (2°) its aim is to explain causally, so far as it is able, and from the inside, what Inductive Psychology explains, so to speak, descriptively and from the outside. Its subject-matter is therefore the

data of psychical experience and in so far as it has such specific data, is more akin to a Science than to a Metaphysics. Moveover (3°), it *does* start with an assumption as to the nature of Reality suited to its own peculiar problem, and the mere fact of this assumption being made seems to constitute a barrier-fact between the Science of first causes and Metaphysics, even though the function of Metaphysics be conceived as purely critical, and not as consisting in the reconstruction of Reality on a basis free from all assumptions.

Assuming then that we are entitled to regard the Psychology of first causes as a Science and not as a Metaphysic, it remains for us to point out that the distinction between the two Psychologies, the inductive and—as we may here suitably call it—the *synthetic*[1] Psychology, affords a basis for a corresponding distinction in the relation of Metaphysics to Psychology. The essence of the inductive method is that it starts with a medley of disconnected facts or data, and aims at discovering hypotheses wherewith to connect and explain the facts. These hypotheses are relatively to the facts they seek to explain fluctuating and unstable. Inductive procedure in a word starts with that which is to be explained and aims at explanations which are always hypothetical and liable to be superseded by others. That which gives unity and explanatory coherency to inductive science is just this hypothetical, fluctuating element. Synthetic procedure, on the other hand, starts not with the something that has to be explained, but with the explanatory *factors* themselves, and its endeavour is to justify the explanatory function of these factors. Hence, whereas the unifying explanatory element in inductive procedure is hypothetical, it is accepted in synthetic procedure as the fundamental fact or factor. This distinction made, Metaphysics, it seems, may, according as its procedure is inductive or synthetic, become the abstract science of ultimate hypotheses, or the concrete science of the First Synthesis, Cause, or Universal

[1] Synthetic in the teleological, not in the abstract logical, sense of the term.

Agency, the science of *the* Absolute in the sense of *the* Whole. This science of a Synthetic Metaphysic would stand to Psychology in some such relation as the Science of the First Cause to the Science of first causes. But the result is not here the important point; rather the nature of the relation. From which end, we ask, are we to start in our endeavour to pass from Synthetic Psychology to Synthetic Metaphysics; from the Absolute or from the Individual's Experience? It seems to me that we must start from the latter. A Science of synthesis may find its culminating triumph in an all-inclusive and explanatory Theism but it must surely grow out of much humbler considerations. Immediate individual experience is the one true vital synthesis whence all such synthetic effort must assuredly start, for it is that which is ever-present with us as the fountain-head of all our knowledge. To be fruitful and progressive all synthetic Science whose aim is to reconstruct the Real according to its own nature, without abstracting from any essential feature of Reality as it is known to us, must be rooted in the immediate experience of the individual first cause, and grow out thence in some specific way. And if such growth should eventually bring with it not only the larger vision of Reality, but a simultaneous growth out of the individualistic starting-point altogether,—is this not both natural and logically inevitable? The roots of a tree grow and ramify *pari passu* with the branches, and the mustard-tree of the Kingdom of Knowledge is assuredly no exception to this universal law of Expansion. The one essential safeguard of concrete synthetic science we take to be this, that it should from the very outset cleave to Reality, grasp, that is, at something which shares the nature, though it share not the fulness, of the Absolute. If the limitedness of its point of view compels it to grapple itself to Reality by the help of some assumption, the assumption merely interprets the nature and scope of its contact with Reality, and does not signify an abstract remove of one or more degrees from such living contact with the Real. Once at grasp with Reality, the logic of

growth will surely justify it in bringing wider and yet wider reaches of the Real within its compass, in passing from one relative whole of Experience to another and yet another, each more comprehensive and organic than the one preceding it, until some fruitful vision of the whole be reached. In some such way as this, perhaps, might the Psychology of first causes prepare the way for the Philosophy of the First Cause.

IV

THE LIMITS OF EVOLUTION

By G. E. UNDERHILL

I. THE PROBLEM

1. The relation of Philosophy to the Sciences.
2. Within what limits does the process of Evolution hold good?
3. The meaning of Evolution.

II. PRESUPPOSITIONS OF EVOLUTION

4. *a*, Becoming.
5. *b*, One and Many.
6. *c*, Things.
7. *d*, Time and Space; *e*, Force.

III. GAPS IN NATURE AND IN KNOWLEDGE

8. Science, though it assumes the homogeneity of matter and that *Natura non facit saltum*, recognises the gaps between the inorganic and the organic, and between life and mind.

IV. EVOLUTION IN THE INORGANIC SPHERE

9. Science regards even the chemical elements as evolved from homogeneous matter according to eternal laws of motion.
10. Science (*a*) never deals with origins, (*b*) aims to express differences of quality in terms of quantity.
11. But differences of quality, though they have quantitative aspects, are not mere differences of quantity: they are no less real and no more phenomenal than differences of quantity.
12. The aspects of things, with which mechanical science deals, are products of mental creation and are measured by standards which again are products of mental creation.
13. Thus mechanical science limits its Evolution to the changes of position and shape of homogeneous particles of matter according to eternal laws of motion.
14. Natural Selection may be regarded as due to Chance, if by Chance is meant a cause or causes unknown to human calculation. But 'blind' Chance is not a possible object of science.

O

V. Evolution in the Organic Sphere

15. Life is a factor in organisms, which presents problems distinct from their mechanical and chemical aspects.
16. Life implies adaptation and with it the notion of Teleology.
17. The Evolution of organisms can only be 'explained' by describing the succession of consequent upon antecedent stages according to unchanging biological laws.
18. Adaptation implies purpose; though the metaphor is taken from human adaptation of means to ends, science is not concerned to decide whether such purpose is conscious or unconscious.
19. But philosophy sees in such purpose only one more instance of rational agency in things, parallel to those laws of matter, motion and force, which are capable of expression in rational terms.

VI. Evolution in the Sphere of Consciousness

20. The problem of Evolution is here generically the same as in biology: given consciousness and certain permanent laws of mental processes, successive stages in mental Evolution can be explained in the sense that they can be described more or less accurately as happening in accordance with such permanent laws.

VII. Results of the Inquiry

21. The Evolutionist (*a*) cannot deal with origins, (*b*) must assume permanent and unchanging laws of development, and (*c*) must discover relations intelligible to his own reason.
22. The Darwinian Evolution is fundamentally the same as the Aristotelian conception of Final Cause.

Ὁ μὲν συνοπτικὸς διαλεκτικός, ὁ δὲ μὴ οὔ.

I. The Problem

§ 1. No one has maintained more strongly than Plato the close connection between philosophy and the special sciences, and nowadays Mr. Herbert Spencer, following boldly in his footsteps, has entitled his own work *Synthetic Philosophy*, implying thereby that his own aim is similarly to exhibit the relations of one science to another and the relations of the whole body of scientific truth to philosophy in general—to survey as from a high watch tower the totality of relations that constitute the universe. But in this age of specialisation no mind is large enough and no life is long enough to enable any single man to grasp even the principles of all the separate sciences—much less the immense body of truths that depend upon them. Even Mr. Spencer after many years of incessant labour has been obliged

to omit two important volumes in his long series—the two volumes which were to deal with the inorganic kingdom and describe or explain the transition from inanimate matter to things endowed with life. In fact, the philosopher of the present day is at a distinct disadvantage when compared with his predecessor of even two or three generations ago. Descartes, Leibnitz, Kant were leaders of science as well as philosophers, and practically knew all that the science of their day could teach them. The modern philosopher, more often than not, has had no scientific training, and is dependent for his general notions of scientific truth on second-hand evidence or on authority. If by some chance or other he excels in one science, he cannot excel in all. He has too to contend against another difficulty, in some ways even harder to meet. While he is but too well aware of his own ignorance of the sciences, scientific men, eminent in their own special branches, are by no means so modest. They are apt to think, like the Athenian artisans, of whom Socrates complained of old, that because they know one thing well, they know all. And more especially are they apt to think that they can lay down the law with equal certainty in philosophical subjects. Now, though it may be true that all men who think at all, are bound to philosophise, it by no means follows that they are bound to philosophise well. Indeed philosophy, like science, needs its own special training, and, if the study of it can reveal to us no royal road to truth, yet it can warn us against many by-paths which in past times have led men into hopeless errors, and now stand as open as ever to allure the wanderer from the truth: and into some of these the scientific man, turned philosopher for the nonce, has shown himself peculiarly ready to stray.

§ 2. The subject of the present essay is a modest one: it is to consider, some forty years after the appearance of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and of Spencer's *First Principles*, the limits within which the theory of Evolution seems to be applicable, and to consider them from a

philosophical point of view. The writer is well aware of his own ignorance of the sciences, and can pretend to no very deep or encyclopædic study of philosophy. Acute critics of every school have dealt, favourably or unfavourably, with the various exponents of evolutional doctrines—none more ably than Professor James Ward in his four[1] brilliant lectures on "the Theory of Evolution," wherein Mr. Spencer is the chief object of his onslaught. The present writer, however, wishes to deal, not so much with the truth or falsity of particular views about Evolution, as with the general limits within which the process of Evolution as such can ideally be supposed to apply. Does the acceptance of Evolution involve the *πάντα ῥεῖ* of Heraclitus as against the Eleatic permanence of being? or is it rather a case of possible variations within constant fixed terms?

§ 3. Darwin, it is well known, hardly ventured on any speculations outside the range of his own observations upon plant and animal life. Hence the strength of his position. Mr. Spencer would apparently extend the evolutional process to the whole universe, though it is by no means clear what he would wish to include in the universe. When he tells us that "there is an alternation of Evolution and Dissolution in the totality of things," we not unnaturally suppose that he means to include everything. Not so, however, for when he speaks of force, he tells us: "By the persistence of Force, we really mean the persistence of some Power which transcends our knowledge and conception. The manifestations, as recurring either in ourselves or outside of us, do not persist; but that which persists is the Unknown Cause of these manifestations." Again, he asserts the existence of "an Unconditioned Reality, without beginning or end." Perhaps indeed he would not include force or power or the laws of nature under the term things. Still as manifested to us, they are certainly "phenomena," and if all phenomena are but the manifestations of an "Unknown Cause"—be this

[1] Cf. *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, vol. i. p. 185 ff.

Unknown Cause mind or matter—it is hard to see what differentia is left him, whereby to distinguish things as phenomena from force, gravitation, etc., as phenomena; so that, if the process of Evolution is to apply to all phenomena universally, it ought to be as applicable to gravitation as it is to elephants. In fact in Mr. Spencer's hands the term "Evolution" has passed away entirely from its old and limited meaning of the[1] "gradual unfolding of a living germ from its embryonic beginning to its final and mature form," to the quite different meaning of the "process by which the mass and energy of the universe have passed from some assumed primeval state to that distribution which they have at present." Evolution in this sense is, in a word, the process of the World's Becoming.[2] And it is in this sense that many scientific men—let alone philosophers—use the term quite outside its old limitation to the development of vegetable and animal forms. Thus Sir Norman Lockyer, in an article[3] dealing with recent attempts to trace the origin of the chemical elements, habitually speaks of the Evolution of the elements from something homogeneous to their present heterogeneity.

It is then in this wider sense of 'Becoming' that the term 'Evolution' will be used in this essay, and it is the writer's object to deal with the presuppositions which any philosophical account of the World's Becoming in general or any scientific account of any Becoming in particular must necessarily start.

II. Presuppositions of Evolution

§ 4. The most obvious of all the presuppositions is Becoming itself. It can only be taken as an ultimate fact given us in immediate perception—a fact which

[1] Ward, *ibid.* vol. i. p. 186.

[2] Evolution is often defined as the gradual process of adaptation between inner and outer relations, and doubtless it is so used in particular cases; but obviously there can be no evolution of the "universe" in this sense: for there can be no outer relations, outside the universe.

[3] *Nature*, lxi. p. 131 ff.

Thought as such can never grasp or explain. For Becoming is always continuous. Thought is successive. A bar of iron at the temperature α is raised by heating to the temperature β. Though the process of heating is continuous, Thought can only represent it to itself as passing through a succession of stages x^1, x^2 . . . x^n, each one of which it can describe with greater or less accuracy. Still in Thought a similar interval can equally well be imagined to exist between x^1 and x^2, so that, however exactly all these intermediate stages may be described, the continuous process as such always defies description. And necessarily so, for while Reality is concrete, Thought is in its nature abstract, and as abstract is so far inadequate to Things. Indeed it is hardly too much to say that all the failures in philosophical and scientific explanations are ultimately due to failure at some point or other to recognise this fundamental difference between Thought and Things. All explanation of whatsoever kind must *ipso facto* be abstract and as such inadequate, though its inadequacy is more often than not helped out by tacit assumptions and additions, which we are so accustomed to make that they escape our notice—assumptions and additions derived from the most familiar processes of immediate perception. To recur to the illustration of the heating of the iron bar; we often say that we *understand* what is meant by its temperature being raised from α to β, when really we do not *understand it by Thought* (for it is a continuous process), but only either perceive it actually by our senses or else imagine it. No explanation therefore can deal with a concrete thing as a whole; it can only deal with its various aspects or states, so that the one and only way to avoid error is to be perfectly aware, what abstraction has actually been made, what other aspects have been deliberately left out—aspects which must just as deliberately be added on before the explanation can pretend to any completeness. The Pythagorean attempt to explain Things by numbers is one of the most obvious of such mistakes. Nowadays it may indeed sound

absurd to say that because all things are numerable, they must therefore be caused by numbers. But are modern philosophers quite sure that because they have outgrown this particular error, they are quite free from the taint of the same fallacy? Is there not a similar error in thinking that because all things are material and in motion, therefore they must have not only their ultimate, but their complete explanation in terms of matter and motion, whatever other qualities they may possess in addition.

But before proceeding further it will be well to remind ourselves what is meant by "explanation" in the scientific sense. A scientific explanation may give one of two things: either it may give an accurate quantitative formula, *e.g.* Newton's law of gravitation; or in cases of causation the antecedent conditions. Both modes are highly abstract, and the latter suffers from an inherent defect: for "the true nature of the cause," as Professor Andrew Seth[1] puts it, "only becomes apparent in the effect." The antecedents in abstraction from their consequents are not real antecedents at all. Cause and effect in reality are inseparable. Taken by themselves the antecedents do not explain the consequent; taken together with the fact of their combination and of their change they are identical with the consequent: for the continuous process involved in causation always eludes, as we saw, intellectual expression.

§ 5. At the same time, however, that we have to admit this ultimate difference between abstract Thought and concrete Things, the very possibility of science at all postulates the intelligibility of the universe. It is a postulate which the most elementary science has to take for granted, and which is confirmed by each new discovery. We cannot, or at any rate we need not, go so far as Hegel and say that the rational is the real and the real is the rational, but we cannot advance one step without assuming in some sense or other the rationality of Things. Whether we take it with Plato's Socrates as a gift of gods to men sent

[1] *Man's Place in the Cosmos*, p. 15.

down by some Prometheus, or whether we call it with Mill the Uniformity of Nature, or with the late Duke of Argyll the Reign of Law, we must admit that all things are made up of the One and the Many and have determinateness and indeterminateness in themselves. This again is an ultimate fact of our experience and for it we can bring forward no reason or explanation. From the point of view of their oneness they become intelligible to us, and the task of all science is to discover this oneness, but their multiplicity or manifoldness which staggers our intellect and is utterly beyond its grasp, is equally an ultimate fact of experience, and as such must be taken into account, if the system of our Thought is to be made in any degree adequate to the system of Things.

§ 6. But these two fundamental postulates of science, the first that Things become, the second that Things are both one and many, evidently involve a third postulate, quite as fundamental, if not more so—the postulate of Things. What right have we to talk about Things at all? It is again only our experience that gives us this right. For us Things are a product of this experience, and in our experience Things are only given in correlation with Thoughts. As Kant put it, our Understanding makes Nature, but does not create it. For purposes of science, however, we abstract Things from our Thoughts, and for this purpose Lotze's [1] definition of a Thing is as good as can be arrived at. "A Thing," he says, "is the realised individual law of its procedure." By this definition he implies that Things—at any rate as they are given us in perception—are both particular and changeable, changeable, however, only according to a law which connects the various changes, properties, or phenomena of the thing with each other; and that this law realised here and now in a particular instance constitutes the Thing: for a law "has no reality except in the case of its application." In other words the individual thing of perception is both a universalised particular and a particularised universal: or as Mr. Bradley [2] puts it, "the individual is both a concrete

[1] *Metaphysic*, p. 68, Eng. trans. [2] *Logic*, p. 175.

particular and a concrete universal. . . . So far as it is one against other individuals, it is particular. So far as it is the same throughout its diversity, it is universal."

§ 7. This essay, however, is not the place for a metaphysical discussion upon the ultimate nature of the real, or matter, or substance. Here it is necessary merely to point out the postulates of all scientific thinking without attempting to justify them. We must then in some sense take it for granted that Things exist, that Things change, that Things are one and many, that Things are intelligible. We must also postulate that Things are in time and space, and are acted upon by force. In fact these postulates are already involved in those already taken for granted. For nothing (if psychical things be excluded) can change except in time and in space, and except there be some force, external or internal, to make it change.

III. Gaps in Nature and in Knowledge

8. The ideal of most men of science from the early Atomists downwards has been to explain "the multiplicity of things by the help of changeable relations between unchangeable elements." Matter, it has been assumed, is homogeneous, and the difference of its apparent qualities is to be accounted for by the varying arrangements, or motions of its ultimate particles, for *entia non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem*. If then we can once arrive at these unchangeable elements, the conception of Evolution must obviously be inapplicable to them. Men of science have also been haunted by another ideal, expressed in the old maxim *Natura non facit saltum*, or in its more modern form, the law of continuity. Guided by these ideals they have been extremely unwilling to admit the existence of any gaps in their science; and if in the existing imperfect state of knowledge, they have been obliged to admit the actual presence of such gaps, they have always hoped that the advance of knowledge would tend to fill them up entirely or reduce them to a minimum. At the present time the most serious gaps are the gap between the

inorganic and organic worlds and the gap between life and mind. As a consequence the existing sciences fall into three corresponding groups—the sciences dealing with physical phenomena, like Physics and Chemistry, the sciences dealing with vital phenomena, like Animal and Vegetable Physiology, and the sciences dealing with mental phenomena, Psychology, Ethics, etc.

We must therefore ask how far the conception of Evolution in its wider sense of "Becoming" is applicable in these three groups taken severally.

IV. Evolution in the Inorganic Sphere

§ 9. As already mentioned, Sir Norman Lockyer sees an exact parallel between the evolution of the inorganic, and that of the organic world. "In the problems of inorganic evolution," he says,[1] "which we have now to face, it is sufficiently obvious that we have to deal with a continuously increasing complexity of chemical forms, precisely as in organic evolution the biologist has tried to deal, and has dealt successfully, with a like increase of complexity of organic forms."

Again he speaks of the material world being "built up of the same matter under the same laws," and he can see no break in the order of material evolution from end to end. The chemical elements, he believes, are not ultimate. He quotes with approval the words of Dr. Preston:[2]—"We are led to suspect that not only is the atom a complex composed of an association of different ions, but that the atoms of those substances which lie in the same chemical group are perhaps built up from the same kind of ions, or at least from ions which possess the same e/m,[3] and that the differences which exist in the materials thus constituted arise more from the manner of association of the ions in the atom than from differences in the fundamental character of the ions which build up the atoms."

[1] *Nature*, lxi. p. 131.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 133.

[3] e = electric charge; m = mass.

§ 10. These attempts to express the differences of the chemical elements in terms of matter and motion may be taken as typical of all theories which attempt to reduce qualitative differences to quantitative differences, or to describe secondary qualities in terms of primary qualities. The first point to notice is, that the problem of ultimate origin or first cause is—and with reason—left untouched. Matter and motion are taken for granted: indeed for physical science there is no need to go behind them. Matter, further, is assumed to be homogeneous, and motion to manifest certain unchangeable laws, like Newton's laws of motion, etc. Evidently therefore there can be no evolution either of homogeneous matter as such, nor of the unchangeable laws of motion. Evolution for the man of science has no absolute beginning. His task is simply to describe the process as exactly as possible from the given state of matter and motion x to the state y which is *ex hypothesi* later in the order of time. Thus, if we take the Nebular Hypothesis of the evolution of our planetary system, we by no means get back to the beginning of things. Theoretically, it must be just as possible to give a scientific description—in other words, a determinate and exact description in terms of matter and motion—of the assumed nebulous state as to give a scientific description of the planetary system in its present state. The evidence may indeed be more difficult to collect and formulate, but it lies *in pari materia.* Secondly it is remarkable that such theories all more or less tacitly assume that the qualitative differences of the chemical elements and other supposed composite effects are *fully* explained by their quantitative differences, which, it is hoped, may ultimately be measured according to some unit or units of numerical relations. This surely is a large assumption and must not be allowed to pass unchallenged. Does it necessarily follow that—if x be taken as their unit of measurement—because one chemical element can be described as $20x$ and another as $30x$, all their differences are traceable to their numerical difference, $10x$? To take an analogous instance: an organ, a

piano, and a violin may all sound the same note, which may be numerically measured by its number of vibrations *e.g.* 50 per second, yet at the same time the *timbre* given to this same note by the three instruments is so different that it can be at once detected even by the most untrained ear. These differences of *timbre* again can be numerically measured in terms of subordinate vibrations, and are recorded on the metallic discs of the phonograph quite as distinctly as the different notes themselves. That there is an essential connection between sounds and vibrations is sufficiently obvious. But that sounds *are* vibrations and that vibrations *are* sounds, is not so obvious; for they may be, for all we know, joint effects of an unknown cause y. Sound we know as a perception of hearing: the minute vibrations we know as a conception abstracted from our perceptions of sight and touch. How are we to pass from the evidence of the one sense to the evidence of the other?

§ 11. To return to the chemical elements, there is similarly no evidence to show that the differences of the chemical elements from each other are *exhausted* by such differences as they possess, which are capable of being expressed in terms of matter and motion. To apply the analogy just adduced, is it not quite conceivable that two different chemical elements might be describable in identical numerical terms of matter and motion and yet possess such a different *timbre*, so to speak, that their real difference could not be denied? Such hypotheses can only be taken to give any hope of an ultimate explanation of Things on the assumption—surely a very large one—that there is nothing real in the universe except matter, motion, and their laws of action and interaction. Similarly in the sphere of colour: blue may be described as light of wave length x and red as light of wave length y: the primary qualities, that is to say, manifested by these two colours, may be perfectly numerable or measurable. None the less, red is still red and blue is still blue. It is an attempt to account for a complex whole by its most measurable part or aspect, while all the time the relation

between the part and the whole remains quite unintelligible. It is like saying that, because this man is just and has two legs, the two legs are the cause of his justice. In a word these theories one and all imply or are apt to imply that the primary qualities alone are real, in Locke's words, "do really exist in the bodies themselves," "are in the things themselves, whether they are perceived or no; and upon their different modifications it is that the secondary qualities depend." Berkeley and Hume demonstrated the fallacy of this position long ago and no one has ventured since seriously to impugn their arguments. As Mr. Bradley has clearly put it,[1] "the line of reasoning, which showed that secondary qualities are not real, has equal force as applied to primary. The extended comes to us only by relation to an organ [of sense]; and, whether the organ is touch or is sight or muscle-feeling—or whatever else it may be—makes no difference to the argument. For, in any case, the thing is perceived by us through an affection of our body, and never without that." And again, "without secondary quality extension [which is involved in all the so-called primary qualities] is not conceivable." It is needless here to reproduce the various arguments at length. Bacon complained of the old Scholastic Logic as being *subtilitati naturæ longe impar*. Surely some of our scientists of to-day are victims of the same mistake: they accept as ultimate facts the immutability of matter, the conservation of energy, the transmutation of force, the development of the various sense organs from a primary sense of touch or a muscular sense, and taking any concrete thing, they strip off all its secondary qualities as in themselves of no importance, being only manifestations or modifications of its primary qualities; then they take its primary qualities and describe them in terms of some assumed units of measurement. This done, they expect us to believe that even if they have not explained the nature of the *real* thing as it is in itself, yet they have given us the *whole* of its phenomenal nature, and that nothing more

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 14.

need or can be known about it. It may of course very well be that the relation of the primary to the secondary qualities involves an insoluble problem: the important point is that it is a problem and must not be passed over in such phrases as—"all chemical atoms have a common basis, and build new mental images on this basis"[1]—phrases which imply that matter and motion alone are real, all other qualities being more or less mental illusions.

So far then we have arrived at this result. Natural science for its purposes takes account only of the numerable or measurable qualities of things, and in dealing with secondary qualities, like colour, sound, and taste, regards them as results of their primary qualities, without, however, explaining their causal connection; and is also very apt to speak of them, as Locke did, as "the certain bulk, figure, and motion of the insensible parts in the bodies themselves."

§ 12. Two further points in the above analysis here call for notice: the first is the predominance of the mental factor in the primary qualities and their estimation or description in various units of measurement; the second is the limitation which this abstract view of things imposes upon the problem of Evolution.

To begin with the first point. Before any thing, *e.g.* the motion of a billiard ball, can be made the subject of scientific investigation at all, it must undergo a large amount of mental preparation. It cannot with any hope of success be treated in its concrete entirety. It must be taken as an instance of the operation of a universal law or laws. We must neglect as irrelevant to our purpose many of the particular circumstances that surround its motion, like, *e.g.* its colour, its material, the colour of the cloth on which it rolls, the time of day, the place, the person who rolls it, etc. etc. All these circumstances taken together make up the concrete individual phenomenon, but *for our purpose* we abstract them, until we have left one or more aspects of the phenomenon only, sufficiently simple for our science of

[1] Lockyer, *Nature*, lxi. p. 297.

mechanics to be able to cope with. In other words, having thus arrived at the mechanical aspect of the problem, the science is able to give a mechanical explanation of it: but the power to arrive at this aspect, is entirely due to the mind's power of abstraction. This is no mere reassertion of the epistemological truth that the unit of knowledge is subject *plus* object—the interrelation of the knowing mind and the object known —so that we can never arrive either at subjects *per se* or at objects *per se*. The point for emphasis is that the objects of all mechanical sciences are not the things of common experience as such at all, but only one particular aspect of them, namely, their primary qualities, and that this aspect, like all other particular aspects, is arrived at by mental abstraction. Equally true is it that the mechanical explanation or description of these primary qualities, when it is given, is just as much a mental product. Though it deals with matter and motion, it is expressed in terms of law, number, or measure.

Historically, the conception of a Law of Nature is of course anthropomorphic. But natural science uses the term not in its juridical sense, but in the sense of a uniformity of sequences or coexistences. To arrive at such uniformities, however, we have to compare instances together, and to abstract from their individual characteristics the identical process in them to which, having thus abstracted it, we give the name of law. The law we arrive at is the result of this abstraction and without it is impossible. The applicability of such conceptions to the multiplicity of phenomena is one of the best evidences of the rationality of things. All Nature is akin, as Pindar sang, and there is as much Mind in Things as there is in ourselves. Similarly, when we use measures or numbers in our mechanical descriptions, not only are we obliged to take some arbitrary standard like a mile or a minute for our unit, but the very processes of numbering or of measuring are abstract mental creations. So true is it that even in the inorganic kingdom it is rather mind that explains matter than matter that explains mind.

§ 13. To come now to our second point, the limitation imposed by natural science on the problem of Evolution. "We now know," we are told,[1] "that heat, sound, light, chemical action, electricity, and magnetism are all modes of motion";[2] the different physical forces may be converted from one form into another: heat may be changed into molar movement or movement of mass; this in turn into light or sound, and then into electricity, and so forth. Accurate measurement of the quantity of force which is used in this metamorphosis has shown that it is "constant" or "unchanged." That is to say, the Evolutionist has for his problem in the inorganic kingdom —from the mechanical point of view—to show, describe, enumerate, or measure the various motions whereby the different atoms, ions, or particles of homogeneous matter assume the configurations or arrangements that constitute in the first instance the various chemical elements; then how these elements under these same unchangeable laws of motion get into a nebulous state; again how under the same laws the nebulæ pass into more shapely planetary or other systems; and finally how in each planet or at any rate some of the planets, oceans, and continents, mountains and plains, lakes and rivers, are formed by the same agencies. Matter and motion, motion and matter—and their quantitative relations, are to mechanical science the real essences of all things. This, then, is the problem of Evolution for mechanical science: given as permanencies, homogeneous matter and certain unchangeable laws of motion, which *ex hypothesi* are liable to no evolution—to trace the motions whereby the ultimate particles assume different positions or configurations at different times and places. When the mechanical Evolutionist has solved this problem, he has achieved his task—a task in itself legitimate, noble and useful, but not exhaustive. For Nature to the mechanical Evolutionist is an abstraction, a Nature of primary qualities, not Nature in her concrete reality. In reality Nature is not thus

[1] Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 235, Eng. trans.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 217.

separated from her secondary qualities nor from her relations to mind. Nature has indeed to be studied in parts and in aspects, because *citius emergit veritas ex errore quam ex confusione*. But Nature herself is a whole, and the parts are only what they are by their relations to this whole. The parts, the aspects, the qualities, the relations which we have thus deliberately abstracted, must be scientifically described and restored to their proper places again, if our knowledge about Nature is ever to be at all adequate to Nature herself. "For we know in part: . . . but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

§ 14. Before leaving this subject we may note that some scientists in treating of inorganic evolution use the Darwinian term "Natural Selection" to describe what they consider to be the most important of the causal agencies at work. A word must be said later on [1] as to the anthropomorphic metaphor involved in the term. Their meaning obviously is that among all possible alternatives the present state of the universe is due to blind chance. "Since impartial study of the evolution of the world," [2] as Haeckel puts it, "teaches us that there is no definite aim and no special purpose to be traced in it, there seems to be no alternative but to leave everything to blind chance. . . . Neither in the evolution of the heavenly bodies nor in that of the crust of our earth do we find any trace of a controlling purpose—all is the result of chance." This may indeed be admitted if "chance" be taken in its strictly scientific sense, as equivalent to "a cause or causes unknown to human calculation"; and it is in this sense that Haeckel himself takes it, for he adds: "This, however, does not prevent us from recognising in each 'chance' event, as we do in the evolution of the entire cosmos, the universal sovereignty of nature's supreme law, *the law of substance*." In other words, if there be taken for granted, as necessary presuppositions, particles of homogeneous matter and all the known laws of Nature, then we may say that the present state of the cosmos is

[1] *Infr.* § 19. [2] Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 218, Eng. trans.

due to the action upon these particles of all the known laws of Nature *plus* chance, where "chance" means other uniform causes that are unknown. Surely this is a mere truism, which properly interpreted serves only to emphasise once more the supremacy of Mind. For all known laws of Nature are *ipso facto* intelligible and general formulæ; therefore by analogy we have every reason to suspect that the unknown laws of Nature, could they be discovered, would also be intelligible formulæ, and therefore in like manner sure evidence of intelligible and intelligent agency—in a word of Mind. If, however the emphasis be laid on the adjective "blind" and the cosmos be consequently taken as a purely "fortuitous concourse of atoms," not only is this utterly against all scientific evidence; but the chances of there being any "cosmos" at all are mathematically *nil* —one against infinity. This amounts to the denial of any intelligible order or rationality in things, and without some such rationality science can have no object. In a word there can be no science.

V. Evolution in the Organic Sphere

§ 15. When we pass from inorganic to organic evolution, we cross the unbridgeable gap recognised by all men of science. Thus Sir John Burdon-Sanderson, speaking in 1893,[1] tells us: "The origin of life, the first transition from non-living to living, is a riddle, which lies outside our scope." In other words life must be taken as an ultimate fact of experience. But life is unknown to us apart from living organisms, and a living body may be defined in the words of Sir Michael Foster[2] as "a machine doing work in accordance with certain laws": and "we may seek," he goes on to say, "to trace out the working of the inner wheels, how these raise up the lifeless dust into living matter, and let the living matter fall away again into dust, giving rise to movement and heat. Or we may look upon the individual life as a link in a long chain, joining something which went before to something

[1] British Association Address, 1893. [2] British Association Address, 1899.

about to come, a chain whose beginning lies hid in the farthest past, and may seek to know the ties which bind one life to another. Of the problems presented by the living body viewed as a machine, some may be spoken of as mechanical, others as physical, and yet others as chemical, while some are, apparently at least, none of these." Here again we see the powers and uses of mental abstraction: organisms are conceived as bundles of qualities, presenting various aspects. For scientific purposes these aspects can be detached from the whole and treated separately: thus organisms are, from one point of view, matter in motion, and as such present problems for mechanical and physical solution: from another point of view, animal heat, digestion, etc., involve chemical changes and are fit subjects for chemistry; for living bodies possess secondary as well as primary qualities. At this point many scientists have stopped under the notion, we are told,[1] that, "however complicated may be the conditions under which vital energies manifest themselves, they can be split into processes which are identical in nature with those of the non-living world, and, as a corollary to this, that the analysing of a vital process into its physical and chemical constituents, so as to bring these constituents into measurable relation with physical or chemical standards, is the only mode of investigating them which can lead to satisfactory results. . . . The methods of investigation being physical or chemical, the organism itself naturally came to be considered as a complex of such processes, and nothing more. And in particular the idea of *adaptation*, which is not a consequence of organism, but its essence, was in great measure lost sight of." Here then we have a distinguished physiologist reiterating the old complaint of Bacon already quoted that the method used is *subtilitati naturæ longe impar*—that 'adaptation,' the ultimate essence of organism is lost sight of.

§ 16. What, however, does the professor mean by 'adaptation'? "Action," he tells[2] us, "is of its essence. . . . The activities of an organism are naturally distin-

[1] Burdon-Sanderson, British Association Address, 1893. [2] *Ibid.*

guishable into two kinds, according as we consider the action of the whole organism in its relation to the external world or to other organisms, or the action of the parts or organs in their relation to each other. . . . Organised nature as it now presents itself to us has become what it is by a process of gradual perfecting or advancement, brought about by the elimination of those organisms which failed to obey the fundamental principle of adaptation. Each step therefore in this evolution is a reaction to external influences, the motive of which is essentially the same as that by which from moment to moment the organism governs itself. And the whole process is a necessary outcome of the fact that those organisms are most prosperous which look best after their own welfare." From these passages two points clearly emerge: the first is that in the opinion of the professor the strictly biological attributes of organisms can never find their ultimate explanation in mechanical and chemical processes; the second, that adaptation is the most essential characteristic of living organisms, and that this adaptation is the result of the *interest* of the individual which is "the sole motive by which every energy [or activity] is guided." In other words the teleological factor is, according to the professor, the most important, and the teleological aspect of organisms has little or nothing to do with their mechanical or chemical aspects. It is impossible without them, but is inexplicable by them.

§ 17. Again, an organism is meaningless without its environment—without its relations to other organisms and to lifeless things. The problem of evolution is therefore to trace the process of adaptation between the organism and its environment. This problem is strictly biological—not physical or chemical—and cannot therefore be reduced to terms of number or measurement: any explanation[1] therefore that can be given must take the form of a statement, as accurate as possible, of the antecedent conditions of the organism under investigation. But how is this to be done? Logically the mode of procedure is

[1] Cf. *sup.* § 4.

precisely the same as in the inorganic sciences. All the postulates necessary in the latter have to be taken for granted and a few more, like that of life and adaptation, have to be added to them; and in addition to the physical and mechanical laws of the inorganic sciences the biologist has to assume the working of certain biological laws, arrived at by mental abstraction from the observation of the actual processes in living organisms. Under these limitations the evolution of species is scientifically explicable. In other words, though science can never tell us *why* nor even *how* one species changes into another species; yet it can, or at any rate hopes to, describe accurately the antecedent conditions of any given stage in the process. Thus to explain a consequent species it must show that the antecedent species was transformed into it in accordance with the observed laws of Heredity, Variation, Natural Selection, etc. This is the way in which Darwin conceived the problem. "It is interesting," he writes at the end of his *Origin of Species*, "to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms [*i.e.* of plant and animal life], so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance which is almost implied by reproduction: Variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse: a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the extinction of less-improved forms. . . . There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." In other words, if we take for granted or as ultimate facts of experience the laws of Growth with Reproduction, of Inheritance, and

of Variability, resulting in Natural Selection, then it is possible to trace the evolution of species from the past stage *x*, through the stages *abcd* . . . to the present stage *y*. For science it is a process without beginning and without end; we never get to the *origin* of species: we have to assume as ultimate principles Growth, Inheritance, and Variability, with their consequence Natural Selection—the most essential attributes of all organisms—and with these laws to help us, we can in some measure describe how "endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." These laws are assumed to be permanent, and as such not liable to evolution, and yet at the same time they are attributes or processes in the organisms which exhibit them, and which are evolved according to them. Once more we find ourselves face to face with the old world problem—the reconciliation of the Permanent Unity of Parmenides with the Perpetual Flux of Heraclitus.

§ 18. 'Adaptation,' however—the teleological factor—we have been told, is the essence of organism. The consideration of this dictum and its implications will lead us to a path which is, philosophically, much more hopeful. Does 'Adaptation,' we may ask, necessarily imply 'design' or 'purpose,' whether conscious or unconscious? Many, perhaps most, scientists, have abandoned the old meaning of conscious purpose—and for the very good reason that they can get on very well without it. For science, as such, cannot know agencies, but only the products of agencies: just as *e.g.* psychology cannot know faculties, but only the products of faculties. But it follows by no means that what we cannot know in the sense of forming an idea or image of it, cannot exist. In the strict sense of the term, we can know an animal in its earlier state *a* and in its later state *b*. But as Professor Burdon-Sanderson puts it, "to assert that the link between *a* and *b* is mechanical, for no better reason than that *b* always follows *a*, is an error of statement, which is apt to lead the incautious reader or hearer to imagine that the relation between *a* and *b* is

understood, when in fact its nature may be wholly unknown." Until Biology can give antecedents for Adaptation, Heredity, and Variability, it has to take them as ultimate facts or principles, and to work with them as such: it does not and need not concern itself with the further question of the Critical Philosophy—how are they possible? This further question is the business of the philosopher, when he is dealing with ultimate biological problems, just as in Mechanics he has to discuss the presuppositions of matter, motion, and force; and, if in this sphere he can frame his answer on the same lines as his answer to the ultimate mechanical problems, he approaches nearer to the Monistic ideal which is the goal of each science in its separate sphere as well as of philosophy as a whole. 'Adaptation' then is the essence of organic life, and adaptation necessarily implies the adaptation of means to ends. But whence is this conception derived? There can, of course, be only one answer: from our own conscious adaptation of means to ends in practical matters. So much every biologist will admit: but most will maintain that the use of the term in respect of organic growths is a mere metaphor, and that we cannot draw any inference from the suitability of the metaphor to the operation of any conscious purpose or design in organic structures. Scientifically they are perfectly right, because there is not and from the nature of things cannot be any evidence of consciousness, such as we know it in ourselves, as present in vegetables or in animals, whether low or high in the scale, outside the human animal: to science adaptation is a law—expressed *ipso facto* in rational terms—under which a great multiplicity of particular phenomena may be brought. What lies behind it, biology does not know, because there is no biological evidence.

§ 19. But the philosopher, remembering how in the mechanical and chemical sciences the rational conceptions of law, number, and figure alone brought order into the chaos of the manifold, will see in biological adaptation no

mere metaphor, but, reasoning by analogy, will see positive evidence of rational agency. Just as he saw the physicist and chemist compelled to interpret the relations of matter, motion, and force in terms of reason, and inferred that our minds were able thus to interpret inorganic Nature because somehow there was a like mind in her, so here again he sees the biologist unable to advance a step without the rational conception of 'adaptation,' and in the same way argues that such interpretation can only be successful on the hypothesis that somehow there is in organic Nature a reason similar to our own, which adapts her means to her ends. "If man can by patience," writes Darwin,[1] "select variations useful to him, why, under changing and complex conditions of life, should not variations useful to Nature's living products often arise, and be preserved or selected? What limit can be put to this power, acting during long ages and rigidly scrutinising the whole constitution, structure, and habits of each creature—favouring the good and rejecting the bad." Over and over again Darwin thus personifies Nature and he does so because he cannot help it—neither is there any reason why he ought to help it. For our own conscious mind is the only key we possess to unlock the secrets of Nature, and if this key will not fit, we have no other. In a word, the evolutionist in the organic kingdom, proceeds in precisely the same way as the evolutionist in the inorganic kingdom. Like him he starts with matter, motion, and force, and chemical change: in addition he assumes as ultimate facts or principles life and the laws of life, adaptation, reproduction, variation, etc. He makes no attempt to give any evolutional genesis of these first principles; to him they are permanent causes: and then having assumed all this, he describes with as scientific accuracy as possible how the organism x changes into the organism y through the intermediate stages $a\,b\,c\,d$ . . . And his description is successful and convincing, but only under these limitations.

[1] *Origin of Species*, new edition, 1900, p. 643.

VI. Evolution in the Sphere of Consciousness

§ 20. But little space is left for the consideration of the Mental and Moral Sciences, which come next in order; but the limitations under which the evolutionist proceeds in this sphere are so very similar that so long an exposition is hardly necessary. In the Mental sciences it makes little difference from the point of view of this essay whether the evolutionist be a psycho-physicist or a pure psychologist. If he be the former, he will start with the principles of biology and attempt to give a history of the successive nerve-states and brain-states in the lower animals and in man which precede and which follow the facts of feeling and of consciousness. But just as life was an ultimate fact and insoluble problem to the biologist, so here feeling and consciousness are ultimate facts and insoluble problems to the psycho-physicist. "There is a gulf," says Dr. Stout,[1] "fixed between the physical and the psychical, of such a nature that it is impossible coincidently to observe an event of the one kind and an event of the other kind, so as to apprehend the relation between them. . . . No analysis can discover in the psychological fact any traces of its supposed physical factors." If on the other hand the evolutionist be a pure psychologist, he will start with consciousness as an ultimate fact, he will try to discover the general laws of mind and mental processes and then he will attempt to describe "in succession the various stages in the development of the individual mind, passing from the more simple and primitive to the more developed and complex."[2] Logically the task before the mental evolutionist is the same as that before the biological evolutionist. He must start with the ultimate fact of conscious mind: he must discover the permanent laws of mental processes—of their variation, reproduction, and heredity, and then he will be able with some accuracy to describe the successive stages in mental evolution; but here, just as much as in the changes of the inorganic sphere, and as in the vital process

[1] *Analytic Psychology*, vol. i. p. 4. [2] *Ibid.* p. 36.

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of the organic sphere, the actual processes involved will *ipso facto* elude his understanding. Mental products and the laws and stages of their production—these constitute his science. The real process is beyond him—the process as it actually goes on in fact.

VII. Results of the Inquiry

§ 21. Our inquiry need not be further pressed: three points at least should now be plain. The first is that the evolutionist can never deal with *origins*. Wherever he begins his analysis—be it in the inorganic, organic, or mental sphere—he must start with some fact of experience and assume it as ultimate—at any rate for his particular purpose. The second is that all evolutionists alike assume the discovered laws of development to be permanent and unchanging, and but few stop to ask, whence comes this permanence and absence of change? it is a real question and raises a real difficulty. For from another point of view these laws are themselves qualities of the very things, whose evolution it is the object of science to trace. Gravity is just as much a quality as a law of masses; reproductive power is just as much a quality as a law of animals; association of ideas is just as much a quality as a law of mind. What then, we ask in vain, is the differentia whereby such permanent qualities are to be distinguished from qualities more fleeting. Why should there be supposed to be an evolution of chemical elements, but no evolution of gravity?

Thirdly and lastly in all scientific discoveries of whatsoever kind the human mind discovers itself and its own intelligible relations; the laws of motion, the law of gravitation, the orbits of the planets, the atomic weight of the chemical elements—so far as they are intelligible to us at all—are intelligible because the mind can number and measure and finds its own numbers and measures in them. The adaptation of organisms—that adaptation which constitutes their very essence—is intelligible because

our mind knows what it means by adapting means to ends. Still more obvious is it that in the Mental Sciences our own mind is our only key to the facts and laws of other minds. *Ταὐτὸν νοῦς καὶ νοητόν.*

§ 22. The doctrine of Evolution then is a doctrine of limited and not of universal application. It has been most successfully applied in the sphere from whence it came—the organic kingdom. In its wider sense—perhaps only distinguishable from mere change or becoming by implying some increase in complexity of form—it is bearing good fruit as a working hypothesis in the inorganic kingdom. When applied to the development of conscious and social phenomena, it is very hard to distinguish Evolution from what our forefathers called history. But in whatever sphere it is applied, its limitations are equally apparent. It must have a matter of some sort in which to manifest itself and its manifestations are conceived, whether rightly or wrongly, to take place according to certain laws. And by all evolutionists alike, this matter, whether materially or ideally interpreted, and these laws are conceived of as permanent and unchanging—*i.e.* as not themselves subject to Evolution. In a word, the One and the Many, the Permanent and the Changeable, involve problems just as insoluble to us as they were to Parmenides and Plato, and we have not evolved (nor indeed are we likely to evolve) any new mental processes whereby to solve them. Human science conquers new kingdoms, but she conquers them with her old weapons—mental reconstruction of sensible experience according to mental principles. Darwin's discovery of the variability of species is no exception to the rule. The mental principle which he used is that which Aristotle formulated as final cause—nothing more or less: what he did was to prove that it held good in a sphere and in a way in which no one hitherto had thought of applying it. This old conception, thus newly applied, has indeed been disguised under the strange but now familiar names of Evolution, Adaptation, Natural Selection—probably for no other reason than Bacon's old con-

demnation of the misuse of final causes in physical sciences—*causa finalis tantum abest ut prosit, ut etiam scientias corrumpat.* In the minds of Bacon's opponents final cause was a *notio male terminata.* In Darwin's mind it became a *notio bene terminata* through his careful observations and experiments. Numberless passages in the *Origin of Species* might be cited; thus referring to Natural Selection and his favourite canon *Natura non facit saltum*, he writes,[1] "[Hence] we can see why throughout nature the same general end is gained by an almost infinite diversity of means, for every peculiarity when once acquired is long inherited, and structures already modified in many ways have to be adapted for the same general purpose." Long ago Aristotle[2] on a slender basis of facts asserted *ἔστιν ἄρα τὸ ἕνεκά του ἐν τοῖς φύσει γινομένοις καὶ οὖσιν.* Two thousand years later Darwin proved the assertion by marshalling the facts.

[1] P. 646.

[2] *Phys.* ii. 8. 6.

V

ORIGIN AND VALIDITY IN ETHICS

By R. R. MARETT

I. ENUNCIATION OF PROBLEM

1. The vital problem of modern Ethics is how to reconcile the standpoints of Origin and Validity.
2. Meaning of these terms defined and illustrated.
3. The problem one of General Philosophy since (*a*) it pertains not only to Ethics but *e.g.* to Religion and Art; (*b*) it involves the difficulty about the relation of the conscious to the non-conscious (instinct).

II. DETERMINATION OF METAPHYSICAL ATTITUDE

4. What is to be our attitude towards our subject taken simply as matter of experience? Metaphysics, the (would-be) theory of experience as a whole, must be experimental, if 'experience is experiment'; which doctrine of the psychologist, however, calls itself for metaphysical endorsement.
5. In 'presentness of experience' the psychologist provides the metaphysician with a standard of reality, whereby he may judge all discursive thinking to be experimental merely.
6. And metaphysical thinking forms no exception to this rule, its special danger being that it exceed the limits of valid experimentation, there being a kind of barely logical conjecture which leads to nothing.
7. Our policy will be to try to avoid this kind of thinking ('metalogic'), and to face the 'facts' of Empirical Psychology.

III. DELIMITATION OF SPHERE OF ETHICS

8. Another preliminary task is to define the scope of Ethics—a subject on which the vaguest views prevail. A treble limitation must suffice us here.
9. (*a*) Life is not all conscious life, and Ethics has no concern with instinct as such.
10. (*b*) Conscious life is not all morality, and the aspect with which Ethics deals presents a certain 'reference' and 'quality' in combination, either of which so far as it is found apart from the other does not come within the range of Ethics proper.
11. (*c*) Morality as a product is but partially due to moral theory, whether as science or as art, since, besides instinct and quasi-instinctive

impulse, there is constitutional feeling to be reckoned with before bare idea can pass into achievement.

IV. Ground-plan of Proposed Synthesis

12. A first glance at the facts offers hope of reconciling Origin and Validity. Our appreciations of right and wrong manifestly involve *some* acquaintance with Origin in the sense of the history, or previous record, of the virtues.
13. Such extreme views as (*a*) that the only Origin worth considering is 'ultimate origin,' and (*b*) that Validity resides in 'things-as-they-are,' are due to metaphysical prejudice which will not stand criticism.
14. Hence (*a*) proposed synthesis—an intuitionism tempered by historical criticism; (*b*) proposed method—to confute the irreconcilables on either side.

V. Mere Origin as an Ethical Standpoint

15. The evolutionary school has no right to base its 'rational utilitarianism' on the fact of the 'unconscious utilitarianism' of physiological nature. The latter represents a mere 'is,' whereas the moralist has to explain and justify an 'ought.'
16. This is, however, not the transcendental 'ought' of the apriorist, but a psychological 'ought,' within which the empiricist has to recognise diverse moments that 'seem' to imply determination from without and determination from within as occurring at once and together.
17. Certain evolutionists indeed, by formally distinguishing between the psychological effects of 'natural' and 'conscious' selection, admit the bare fact of this duality in unity. It remains to follow up the idea into the concrete.
18. For instance, let us consider the phenomena of man's history as a domestic being.
19. These, though they agree in being psychical phenomena, display a duality of intrinsic character which, by a working hypothesis, we will ascribe to a divergence between the 'aims' of natural and conscious selection.
20. It may, however, be contended from the side of Origin that these specific facts on the whole testify to the predominance of the instinctive moment in the moral consciousness.
21. But now consider the closely-related history of the idea of Purity. Here we seem to have a moral principle that has severed its connection with instinct and persists by reason of a validity of its own. To call it a 'by-product,' with the evolutionist, is simply to confess it inexplicable from that point of view.
22. In the absence, then, of any explanation from the side of Origin, the balance of empirical probability is in favour of the spontaneous origination of this ideal by the moral consciousness.
23. A glance at the general history of the virtues (as classified in five 'natural' groups) confirms the view that the duality in question runs right through morality as a product.
24. The *domestic* virtues appear on the whole to subserve the 'natural' end of race-preservation.
25. And this is also true of the *national* virtues.
26. On the other hand, the *personal* virtues seem rather to make for a 'spiritual' end, namely self-perfection.
27. As is even more palpably the case with the *transcendental* virtues.

28. Whilst the *international* virtues show the two moments at work together.
29. The appearances, then, are not unambiguous, much less do they unambiguously favour a metaphysical naturalism, the ethical implications of which can easily be proved to be a tissue of inconsistencies.
30. On the other hand, suppose the votary of Origin eschew the naturalistic metaphysic, and concede a provisional validity to 'spiritual' as distinguished from 'natural' motive on the ground that the one no less than the other is a persistent feature of historical morality, will he not proceed from history to introspection in search of a moral 'ought' that is relatively unambiguous and one?

VI. Validity as an Ethical Standpoint

31. Introspection, regarded as a branch of Empirical Psychology complementary in scope to the historical or comparative branch, shows us that there is immanent in the consciousness of the typical moral subject of to-day a finally decisive power of selective valuation amongst moral principles.
32. Further, introspection can to some extent explain *why* the moral will is ultimately governed by this kind of 'intuition,' namely, because (*a*) discursive thinking, as contrasted with feeling, to which intuition is more nearly akin, involves distraction of attention and consequent enervation of will; (*b*) discursive thinking about futurities, as distinguished from abstract immediacies, is enervating even as regards the will to think; (*c*) discursive thinking about feelings is apt to do permanent injury to the power of feeling, and hence to that of willing with confidence.
33. Now the authoritativeness of moral intuition, to judge by its psychological appearance, is not the mere 'fatality' of instinct.
34. Nor is it the external compulsiveness of custom and law.
35. On the contrary it is essentially internal, *i.e.* self-imposed; and rational, *i.e.* capable of furnishing the supreme organising principle of a normative Ethics that is at once preceptive and explanatory.
36. As to the finality of such a form for Ethics from the point of view of General Philosophy and of Metaphysics, it would seem that normativeness is common to the human sciences, and that there is at any rate much to be said in favour of a teleological interpretation of the universe.

VII. Suggestions for a Combined Use of the Two Standpoints in Empirical Ethics

37. An ultimate authoritativeness in Ethics being, on the various grounds alleged, allowed to Validity, what scope can be found for Origin as a supplementary principle? Now so far as Origin means naturalism, its services can be dispensed with altogether.
38. But if Origin stand for the comparative study of the relations of the 'objective,' *i.e.* external, factor to the 'subjective,' *i.e.* internal and self-authorising, factor in moral process, it has an important function to fulfil.
39. Whilst Validity is from first to last the affirmative principle in Ethics, Origin is the critical. The 'laws' that they conjointly establish are ultimately self-imposed ordinances, rather than observed uniformities, simply because of the 'fact' that moral practicability, whether as sought or as studied, depends in the last resort on ourselves rather than on circumstances.
40. Thus the form most fitting for Ethics as a whole would seem to be that of a critical intuitionism. *Solvitur—aut dissolvitur—experiendo!*

I. Enunciation of Problem

§ 1. A SYNTHESIS of the methodological principles of Ethics would prove very welcome to the philosopher. For, regarded philosophically, Ethics is in a bad way. Hostile camps divide the land. Now two courses are open to the peace-maker. He may break up the disputed territory into lots. Man's interest in himself as a moral being may conceivably have to content itself in the future with a chapter in psychology or anthropology here, a scrap-book of *pensées* there. Or the peace-maker may induce the contending parties to compose their differences. And this, we may be sure, when practicable, is the simpler and more grateful task. At all events, it is along these lines that one's natural prejudice bids one seek for a solution.

Meanwhile it is all in favour of a settlement being shortly reached by the one way or by the other, that the matter and cause of the dispute are tolerably manifest. If Ethics splits into fragments, it will split on the question of Origin *versus* Validity. Or, on the other hand, if Ethics is to maintain its integrity as Ethics, Origin and Validity must be reconciled, that is, room must be found for both principles of explanation to operate freely within a single, well-marked, centrally-governed, self-supporting province of thought.

§ 2. These principles are doubtless of such familiar import as scarcely to stand in need of preliminary definition. Origin, taken in an ethical connection, represents the standpoint from which moral judgments—that is, appreciations of the morally good and bad as applied with regulative intent to human character and conduct—are explained by reference to the previous stages of a historical development imputed to them. Validity is the standpoint from which such judgments are explained by reference to their present worth and significance to the moral subject—to the person or persons uttering them.

A few miscellaneous examples taken from various text-books, ethical and otherwise (the authors of which

may go bail for the facts alleged), will serve to illustrate the general bearing and force of the antithesis:—

We wear clothes to-day from a sense of decency. Originally they furnished our ancestors with a means of sexual attraction.

For us monogamy rests on a theory of the rights of woman. Originally the form of marriage was the immediate outcome of the numerical proportions of the sexes within a given 'area of characterisation.'

This man admires his own class for its intrinsic superiority to the vulgar in point of manners. The origin of his prejudice is to be sought in the racial scorn of a conquering people for its serfs.

That man holds by fasting as conducive to moral self-discipline. In its origin fasting was a means of producing 'ecstatic vision.'

I play golf as a relaxation. Play originally constituted man's apprenticeship in the serious arts of life.

We burn Guy Fawkes for fun. Once the act had political significance. In the background, perhaps, there lurks a rite designed to reinvigorate a corn-spirit.

I think it morally abominable to commit homicide; bad taste to speak evil of the dead; disrespectful to approach my sovereign too closely; dirty to allow another to eat off my unwashed plate. Once these practices were shunned from fear of ghosts or of magical infection.

Now, presuming (as I do on the strength of its past and present tendency) that Ethics cannot afford to ignore either of these standpoints in favour of the other, is there any way, I ask myself, whether through subordination or through co-ordination, of reducing them to a single standpoint — of freeing the ethical 'because' of that fundamental ambiguity which threatens the very existence of Ethics as a working system of explanatory principles? That, in outline, is the problem to be attacked.

§ 3. By way of opening the campaign, let us take the auguries. The foregoing illustrations suggest two

observations which may serve to convey a hint of the kind of affair before us.

(*a*) The first is that the difficulty about choosing between the standards of Origin and Validity is not confined to Ethics, regarded as one amongst several 'organised interests' of the human spirit. Thus some of our cases seemed to relate primarily to the history of Religion; others again to that of Art on its recreative side. Hence we must be prepared to have to cast about somewhat widely for a mediating view. Our object must be to provide a form for our theory of the moral life that will likewise be applicable to our theory of the 'higher life' as a whole.

(*b*) The second is that, of the various 'origins' alleged, some are palpably more original than others. Sometimes, as when I forget Guy Fawkes the Popish plotter in Guy Fawkes the occasion of fireworks, one conscious motive has but retired in favour of another. Sometimes a motive will have altered mainly in respect to the degree of clearness with which the subject grasps it. Thus my prejudice against the serf-class—against 'colour,' let us say—may all along have rested on dimly rational grounds. Sometimes, however, a more radical form of change would appear to have occurred. The motive of shame that bids me cover my nakedness may be contrasted, not with another motive bidding me ingratiate myself with the other sex, which motive may or may not have a certain weight with me still, but with an instinct or organic trend, implanted in my body by natural selection in such a way as to bring about the result contemplated by the last-mentioned motive independently of any act of will on my part. Now this, the most original of so-called origins, will presumably constitute the real *point d'appui* of the more uncompromising champion of the historical method of explanation. His Origin *par excellence* will be 'instinct.' Thus there looms ahead the problem of how to correlate the 'spiritual' and subjective with the purely 'natural' and external. It looks as if the combatants must be brought to parley 'from opposite

sides of the ditch.' Here, then, is further reason to suppose that the argument is bound to transcend the strictly ethical plane; that, in fact, however specific be the application it is intended to give to its conclusions, these cannot be established without the aid of—let us call it, General Philosophy.

II. Determination of Metaphysical Attitude[1]

§ 4. General Philosophy, however, hardly amounts to Metaphysics. On the highest and most characteristic plane of Metaphysics we shall venture but for a moment. And that at once. For, if we are to be thorough, we must start by determining our general attitude towards our subject regarded simply as matter of experience.

Metaphysics, as it is commonly defined, is the theory of experience as a whole. But this is what we would have it be rather than what it is. Actually, it comprises all thinking of which it is the guiding interest to bring our manifold ideal constructions of experience into the completest attainable accord, establishing such accord on grounds that shall seem sufficient, even if they do not exclude a logical possibility of doubt.

For, if 'experience is experiment,' Metaphysics, at once because it helps to constitute, and because it contemplates, experience, must itself be experimental.

But *is* experience experiment? "Surely," the plain man will say, "it is not wholly or merely so. There is nothing in the ordinary sense experimental about a haunting sense of pain. Rather it would seem as if the statement were but intended as a simplification for descriptive purposes of our perplexed experiences. 'Is' must here mean 'is pre-eminently, characteristically, and on the whole.'"

[1] Sections II. and III., containing introductory matter which suffers from much compression, may be omitted by the reader who is impatient to embark on the main theme, so long as he is prepared to allow (*a*) that all philosophy must be empirical in the sense that it must relate to an experience capable of having such actuality as we have experience of 'personally'; (*b*) that the scope of Ethics, the theory of moral good, is narrower than that of the theory of *the* good in life as a whole.

Now the doctrine comes in the first instance from the psychologists. Certain of them find in it an adequate, or at any rate a convenient, basis for the particular 'construction' which, as psychologists, they deem true or least untrue. The construction in question is built up somewhat as follows. The conscious individual in his active capacity—for example, as when he thinks—is moved by interests. These sum themselves up in a master-interest, his desire to live well. This master-interest, however, defies all his efforts to yield it immediate full satisfaction. Thus it ever harks forward towards an indefinite future. Hence, since in conscious experience regarded from this point of view the sense of wanting perpetually both outflanks and outweighs the sense of having, experience is fundamentally a trying, and thinking in particular a thinking-onwards rather than a thinking-out or thinking-to.

But is this point of view finally tenable? Is it, not merely good, but good enough? Can we, not merely as psychologists, but as reasoners in search of synthesis, fairly content ourselves with it? That is what the metaphysician—or, since one man may suffice for both characters, the psychologist turned metaphysician—has to decide as best he can. He has to decide, for instance, whether, in the foregoing description, the stress laid on conation and the conative moment in thinking, the comparative indifference shown to the passive or merely feeling side of our nature, the assumption that our diverse and often incompatible interests can be summated, the refusal to recognise the existence of states of complete content, the identification of the reaching-beyond-itself of consciousness with a reaching-forward in time—whether all these things hold good and must hold good, not merely for the purposes of psychology, but for the purposes of the most comprehensive thinking possible for us.

I hope, then, after thus openly acknowledging the prerogative of Metaphysics as a final court of rational appeal, that I shall not be misunderstood if I proceed

to declare that this psychological account of the essential nature of experience is likewise to me metaphysically satisfactory, in the sense that for the purposes of the most comprehensive thinking it seems as good as can be got.

§ 5. The standard of psychological reality is presentness or actuality of experience. "But 'presentness,'" says the metaphysician, "does not—cannot—hit the mark. No 'what' can be equivalent to 'that.'"——"Its inexpressibleness, then, being, if you will, presumed, let us go on to express it as best we can." So answers the psychologist; and it is his great merit that he has had the courage to set out on this task apparently foredoomed to failure. The metaphysician, on the other hand, is wont to tie himself up into such knots with his heaven-sent principle of contradiction, that he cannot get 'fairly started' at all, much less find himself in a position to 'report progress.' Yet this, paradoxical as it may sound, is just what the psychologist has done. Though lacking a visible 'take-off,' he *has* started, he *has* got on. Wherefore I am the more prepared to follow him.

The psychologist has showered 'whats' on the inexpressible 'that' of actual experience, and has found to his delight that some of them have the power to stick. Ludicrously inadequate they doubtless are—if you start with expecting adequacy of our thought-symbols. Consider the so-called 'positive' attributes that the psychologist has ventured to ascribe to his 'reality.' Presentness, actuality, warmth, intimacy, all-inclusiveness, the me-now, a psychosis, and so on—do any of these anchors take firm bottom? Or consider the so-called 'negative' attributes—the 'infinite' judgments which proclaim their subject not *merely* this or that. 'Not in time,' 'no quality, nor mode, nor subject, nor object, of experience,' 'not felt, nor thought, nor willed,' 'not past, nor future, nor the external world, nor you, nor God,' 'not one, not many,' etc., etc.—how hollow and meagre, beside the fact, is all this indirectness! "But the absurdity," you say, "of trying to make me understand

that of which by intuition I am perfectly aware already!" Not at all. The psychologist, if he has somehow made you understand what he is driving at, has performed a great feat. He has compounded intuitions with you—or, let us say (to leave 'you' somewhat arbitrarily out of account), with himself. He has projected *the* intuition of presentness into the world of thought as *an* intuition. He has found a universal standpoint in the fact about which he is more certain than about anything else. "As sure as I am alive and here" (what matter the words if they but be 'to that effect'!) represents his *ne plus ultra* of conviction.

Which standpoint, I maintain, is no needle-point. Though we be not angels, there is room upon it for us all—even for the metaphysician. The practical failure of his attempt to argue himself out of his sense of present existence ought to provide him with an inkling of where the counterfoil lies to the 'appearance' he decries but finds it so hard to get away from. Appearance attaches to experience in so far as it is divided. I do not say 'divided against itself.' Experience does not always make a 'poor show.' To be 'in' it or 'of' it is enough to constitute show as such. It comes to this—that 'this presentness' is more vital to the existence in experience of any of 'these presents' than any of them are vital to *its* existence. To the extent to which the intuition of presentness does—I do not say 'must,' but 'does'—prevail over all discriminative analysis of the elements presented, to this extent is the 'absoluteness' of the former exalted above the 'relativity' of the latter. To put it thus to myself is formally of course an experiment. Yet, if ever experimentation reaches the limits, not of logical possibility, perhaps, but of a logically *valid* possibility, it must surely be at the point at which the experiment is instantly confronted by the verification—when presentness leaps up from the suggestion of presentness, and overtakes itself.

§ 6. Psychological reality has been cited in order that it may bear witness. It has been cited because it seems

to afford the most crucial proof that, in default of a perfect proof, is to be obtained of the experimental character of discursive thinking as such. Here is something which I cannot argue myself out of, nor yet prove myself to have. Suppose I try to prove that presentness is. I must put the proposition to myself as meaning something—*e.g.* that, presentness removed, there would be nothing. But how can I possibly be present to verify the prediction? The conditions necessary to the proof fall outside one another, not in any merely temporal sense, but really. Hypothesis and verification cannot conceivably come together in any actual experience such as we know in ourselves. Discursive thinking, then, it would seem, is confined to the sphere of the actually possible—nay to the sphere of representability, which, in what the psychologist cannot but regard as its hither aspect, is but the possibility of a possibility, a condition conditioned by something itself conditional, namely presentability.

Thus the essence of all mere thinking—be it metaphysical, or be it of narrower scope—is to be conjectural, or, as I would prefer to say, experimental. For in a sense there are no definable limits to conjecture. There is an experimentation unworthy of the name that is merely logical. Left to itself mere thinking cannot draw the rein on its innate discursiveness. I can conjecture in a barely logical way about a presentness of non-existence. With a certain play and show of reasoning I can follow the notion up to the very verge of suicide—intellectual or actual. But, intuition being permitted to interfere, at least this kind of guess-work is pronounced futile, and in that pronouncement the utmost bounds of *valid* conjecture are set up. Conjecture is restricted to realisabilities. In the conviction *that* they must be realisabilities we are at the point where conjecture verges on certainty. On the other hand, *what* the realisabilities may or may not do and be is purely problematic. Precarious inference following in the wake of a capricious memory has to decide as best it can. Framework and filling of our experience —the things that must be, can be, have been, will be,

ought to be—all alike are doomed to a relative subsistence which we can sufficiently know to be such by the perpetual contrast it affords to the ever-presentness that *is*.

§ 7. The foregoing considerations will not have been out of place in such an essay as this if they in any way serve to point out to the ethical student in search of synthetic principles that the true field for his energies lies, not in the no-man's-land of dogmatic 'Metalogic,'[1] but in the workaday world of Empirical Psychology. It is an essential part of the experimentalist theory that in philosophic inquiry the preliminary attitude makes all the difference. It is not intended to oppose the free assumption of an intellectual attitude to a no less free submission to the teachings of fact. It were a bastard 'Pragmatism' that proclaimed licence as the final authoriser of law. The true Pragmatism asserts no more than that in science nothing can be 'done' unless the prior resolve be there to face the facts fairly. It but reaffirms the old saying that 'none are so blind as those who will not see.' The point of the remark lies in its application to the case of the 'metalogician.' When a man's presupposition is that he has no call to face the facts because forsooth they are 'mere facts'; and when further he maintains that this is no presupposition, because he is a metaphysician, and Metaphysics can 'do without presuppositions,' *i.e.*, by beginning nowhere in particular can end up everywhere at once; then it is time to retort on him with a reminder which, were it not so necessary, might sound a truism.

Our concern, then, shall be, submitting ourselves to that attitude of 'scientific' inquiry so foolishly maligned by some, to confront the never-ending task of correlating the relativities—the apparent realisabilities—of human experience. As the data will be experimental, so must be the results; the stream cannot rise above its source. From Empirical Psychology we shall gratefully accept the 'personal' or 'anthropocentric' standpoint, which, even in order to discount its own bias, our thought, it would seem, is in nature bound to adopt. And, as regards Metaphysics,

[1] The word is framed on the analogy of 'metageometry,' 'metapolitical,' etc.

though we have already had recourse to its aid so as the more circumspectly to choose our path, we had better resolve that for the rest its place shall be on the *further* side of the sciences. Though it may easily be less, it cannot, so we have judged, be more than a final critical survey of the organised facts of experience *as if* a concrete whole, with the object of guaranteeing us such intellectual impartiality and breadth of view as may be possible in our necessarily adventurous attitude towards life in general. Hence, since we cannot in what follows hope to defend our conclusions (save in so far as may by anticipation have been done) against criticisms applying to the general standpoint and broader principles of the psychology they rest on, we had best at once renounce all claim to metaphysical exhaustiveness, and be content to regard our experiment, in virtue of its wide yet intermediary scope, as simply an essay in General Philosophy.

III. Delimitation of Sphere of Ethics

§ 8. Having trenched on Metaphysics just in so far as seemed necessary in order to define our general attitude towards the problem in hand, let us now proceed to get within somewhat closer range of its specific matter. But we have not yet done with preliminaries.

It will be remembered that the instances taken at random to illustrate the antithesis between Origin and Validity suggested of themselves two things. The first was that Ethics is one amongst several 'organised interests' of the human spirit. The other was that altogether outside the sphere of the interests that move the will, yet at every point conterminous with it, lies the mysterious domain of instinct. It would, therefore, seem advisable for us to arm ourselves at the outset with some notion of the limits—I might even say 'the limitations'—of Ethics proper.

There is a confused impression prevalent that, because all willed conduct has in some degree an ethical aspect, therefore Ethics is the theory of human practice in general. Nay, now that a clever, though unscrupulous, trick of

naming has enabled 'the unconscious' to pretend to so many of the attributes of spirit, it is hard to say where, if anywhere, the line round Ethics would be drawn by some. On the other hand, seeing that *divide et impera* is the watchword of advancing science, it is hardly too much to say that the crying need of Ethics is for narrow limits, and the narrower the better. Indeed, if a competent psychologist, realising that there are almost numberless ways in which a man may bring himself to perform the act he believes to be socially salutary, were carefully to characterise the feeling or thought that exerts the decisive influence in each case, I believe that a score of varieties would spring into existence where but one form of moral prompting is recognised to-day. And I believe that, of these varieties, four-fifths might be eliminated as non-moral without prejudice to Ethics as a theory of somewhat comprehensive sweep.

Meanwhile, in an essay of the present kind, only the broadest distinctions, and those most firmly founded on common consent, can be noticed. It will, in fact, suffice to place a treble limitation on the scope of Ethics. Let us, then, briefly remind ourselves: (*a*) that life is not all conscious life; (*b*) that conscious life is not all morality; and (*c*) that morality as a product is but partially due to moral theory, whether organised as science or as art.

§ 9. (*a*) From a narrowly practical point of view there may be little use in dwelling on the suspicion of agencies at work in some indefinite 'outside,' whence they are somehow able to control the phases of our spiritual life. Nevertheless, the suspicion is too well grounded on 'appearance' to be ignored at the scientific level of thought. The question of our 'ideal' self-sufficiency and freedom, if not left to settle itself, must at least be raised in such a way as not to prejudice an open-minded recognition of the 'facts.' And, psychologically, the facts are these, that a sense of freedom coexists with a no less lively sense of constraint. Now, as, I hope, the subsequent argument will tend to show, it is of vital importance for man that he should allow himself to lean chiefly on

his sense of freedom. Even on deterministic principles fatalism might reasonably be denounced as fatal policy. There may, then, be good psychological reason why at the moment of action, nay whenever it is action that is directly contemplated, a man should try to forget that his existence is hung somewhere between the opposite poles of blind instinct and autonomous rationality. When, however, it is simply a question of the 'facts,' to hail ourselves as the absolute masters of our fate is not even a 'noble' lie.

§ 10. (*b*) Next as regards the ratio borne by morality to conscious life as a whole. Even if we be ready to say, with Matthew Arnold, that morality constitutes "three-fourths of life," at least we are admitting it to be less than all. I would not deny that in the scheme of the 'organised interests' a place might be assigned to, and might even in some measure be occupied by, a supreme science and art of life—call we them severally Philosophy and Religion, or what we will. It can, however, but plunge us in methodological chaos to identify such architectonic and all-embracing theories of man's function in the universe with the science and art of Ethics.

The determinate subject-matter of Ethics, as those who have actually worked at its problems would seem generally prepared to admit, is the conduct of life just in so far as it is subject to the influence of a particular kind of praise or blame. Whether administered by self or others, it is usually regarded as belonging to a single kind. And the characters by which this kind may be recognised are commonly held to be two, namely a *reference* and a *quality*, which taken strictly together suffice to constitute it specifically unique. So far it is comparatively plain sailing. The difficulty begins when this reference and this quality have to be defined. Both prove singularly elusive notions. Hence the moralist as a rule is driven to indirect methods of description. He tries to bring out the nature of the differential characters of the moral judgment by contrasting them with those of certain allied kinds of judgment. But thus to transcend the limits of Ethics is not to widen them.

For example, let us suppose sociality to be the distinctive object of ethical reference, and purity or disinterestedness of motive to be the specific mark of ethical quality. How is the moralist to invest these terms with meaning? Sociality is vague enough. And as to purity or disinterestedness, how on earth is he to convey an impression of them to a mind that does not meet him half-way? Thus a strong temptation besets him to 'stand outside' his subject. To his indistinct analysis of the moral judgment he can at least oppose some counter-analysis, say, of our appreciations of beauty and truth on the one hand, and of our prudential valuations—the calculations of 'enlightened selfishness'—on the other. The former show purity without the social reference, the latter has the social reference but lacks purity. Morality consists in the combination of the two. "And now," says the moralist, "you have an inkling of what I am driving at."

Subsidiary studies of this sort, however, but betoken a certain inevitable multiplication of interests, due to our natural tendency when seeking for side-lights to follow out each abstract resemblance overfar. They cannot be held to enlarge the sphere of Ethics proper. Doubtless such methodological restrictions are somewhat tiresome to observe. Tiresome or not, however, they are the prime conditions of scientific continence and sane activity. It is to save time and labour, and not for the simple pleasure of framing empty *cadres*, that science adopts the watch-word *divide et impera*.

Nay, it is precisely because it has hesitated to impose any strict delimitative rule upon itself that ethical science is still so backward. Ethics till of late has been merged in General Philosophy to the prejudice of both. Its ultimate presuppositions have received almost exclusive attention. And the basis of fact, apart from which, as I believe and have tried to show, the attempt to set up presuppositions is the merest waste of time, has for the most part been supplied by prejudice, by imagination, and by the kind of uncritical history that embodies both

these sources of error in their most insidious form. Ethical science, then, as one amongst many sciences (sundry of which, indeed, are likewise 'moral,' but only in the sense in which Mill spoke of the 'moral sciences'), must confine itself to its special task, if it is to throw light on what is but an aspect, though a highly important aspect, of the problem—what are the conditions of the best life possible for man.

§ 11. (*c*) And now to complete our account of the limitations of moral philosophy. It is surely obvious that, in neither of its complementary forms, neither as science pronouncing indicatives nor as art issuing imperatives, is theory equivalent to practice, or moral theory to moral practice. That our one hope lies in trying to think rationally I do indeed believe. But a life that was all rationality—a rationality, so to speak, that 'did itself'—were a condition of existence which even the 'metalogician' finds it difficult to conceive, and which at any rate he would scarcely regard as possible 'for us.'

I am not simply recurring to the 'fact' of instinct—of forces that impinge on the moral nature 'from without.' There are other forces in the background of consciousness that, if not wholly blind, as the instincts, are at least purblind. Constantly we hear the voice of reason without being able to obey, and, like Goethe's *Fischer*, 'half sink and half are drawn' from the living atmosphere of active consciousness into the dim choking depths of some half-physical passion. No doubt even at these depths there proceeds a conscious life of a kind. But the laws that govern it are such as to be hardly comparable with those that hold good at the higher level. Interest, purpose, selectiveness, will—these terms no longer apply save as psycho-physical metaphors.

Nay, not to dwell exclusively on the obscurer phases of 'organic' consciousness, let us consider for a moment the opposition between reason and feeling taken in their broadest sense. The subject is clearly one that will intimately concern us later, seeing that Origin and Validity are to one another something as a judgment

based on history to a judgment based on impulse. Let us note our own inevitable bias in approaching such a problem as the one before us. There is at least a half-truth at the back of the view that a man is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian, a Stoic or an Epicurean, an intuitionist or a utilitarian, an idealist or a materialist. We are spiritually-minded or worldly-minded, believers or sceptics, romanticists or realists, and so forth, primarily at least in virtue of a certain fundamental endowment of massive sentiment. The ceaseless ideas glance to and fro; but they have rarely force enough to affect the centre of temperamental gravity. On the side of thought advance by give and take is relatively easy. But constitutional prejudice, unlike thought, recognises absolute differences. Indeed, save in the case of the rarer spirits, reflection in regard to the broader issues of life has scarcely a chance of making itself felt save indirectly through the medium of what may without prejudice be described as the 'social consciousness.' The expert changes his mind for better or worse. His generation, or the next, half-consciously accepts the new faith. And last of all, perhaps, such wholly subconscious agencies as imitation and early training succeed in the course of centuries in giving a fresh turn to the national or racial 'trend.'

Morality, in short, implies the co-operation of disparate and even discrepant factors, standing as it does to moral philosophy as achievement to bare idea. Even though we suppose, with the logical optimist, that the conditions of such achievement are expressible in ideal form, and that they must be so expressed ere perfect achievement is possible, it is none the less a 'fact' of our distracted workaday experience that it is one thing to yield full intellectual assent to some counsel of perfection, and quite another to succeed in living up thereto.

IV. Ground-Plan of Proposed Synthesis

§ 12. And now let us close with our task. We have to reconcile as best we can the standpoints of Origin and Validity regarded as presumably cognate principles of ethical explanation. Perhaps, then, after all a certain measure of success awaits us. A first glance would seem to show that these two points of view have far more in common than the uncompromising attitude of their respective partisans would ever lead us to suspect.

We have just seen that Origin and Validity, though standing primarily for purely theoretical points of view, present an antithesis of which the force and sharpness is largely due to an underlying opposition between two of the deepest-lying elements of our nature. Origin is primarily a concern of thought, Validity a matter of feeling. And thought is not readily brought to act on feeling, nor feeling persuaded to accommodate itself to thought. Smith's ancestry is at the mercy of the dreary lucubrations of the Heralds' Office. His present worth, on the other hand, is as he and his neighbours feel about it, and (up to a certain point, at least) is independent of disclosures on the part of Burke or Debrett.

But we must not press this simile. To inquire into moral origins is no piece of gratuitous snobbery to be resented in the interest of the honest convictions of the hour. In this connection we must be respecters of descent. In the case of our moral habits and ideas descent affords a most important criterion of respectability, though taken by itself the criterion is inadequate.

Moral principles are no isolated atoms. Rather they may be likened (for our present purpose, at any rate) to the functions of an evolving organism. The higher the organism, the more completely will a hierarchy of co-operating factors have been established. And in such a hierarchy authority will tend to be bestowed on tried service. For the latter offers a promise of further service

to come, which, if occasionally disappointing, is nevertheless the surest amongst available means of forecast.

In the case of the virtues, then, their previous record, so to speak, as distributed over the whole series of the affiliated forms they have assumed in the course of their history, may be accepted as a guarantee, good as far as it goes, of a future career of usefulness. Changes in function or even structure may have affected the family identity to a considerable extent. Still, a tendency of a more or less marked kind is likely in every instance to be discernible. And on this it ought to be possible to found some conditional anticipation of events.

If, therefore, we understand by Origin, not some hypothetical first-beginning, but total back-history or previous record, surely it is plain common-sense that considerations of Origin must have *some* weight in our appreciations of right and wrong. And since it is equally obvious that thought unsupported by feeling is powerless to found a habit of will, here, then, are manifest indications of concurrence on which to base our reconciliation of these standpoints.

§ 13. Let us next for a moment take stock of the misconstructions to which either principle is subject at the hands of its extremer partisans. There is clearly critical work for us ahead. Indeed, the outlook portends that, could prejudice, presumably of a metaphysical kind, be put at arm's length, a compromise between the two standpoints would quickly settle itself, to the infinite gain of Ethics as a specific branch of inquiry.

(*a*) The uncompromising champion of Origin is all for 'ultimate origins'—whatever those may be. He is probably at heart a materialist. And it must be allowed that contemporary evolutionism is only too ready to play into his hands. He is one of those whose perverted taste for the transcendental leads them to confine their interest almost wholly to what may be nicknamed 'the science of prehistorics.' This constitutes a region of inquiry wherein the imagination can roam at its own sweet will, untrammelled by books of reference or other

base mechanical apparatus. Such a person has a 'short way' with the upholder of Validity. If his mythical *protanthropus* is credited with a nasty habit of avoiding cold water, then baths are a worthless convention, and *homo sapiens* is a fool for his lixiviatory pains.

Now our general policy towards such a person will plainly be to declare that he has not the smallest right to speak in the name of the Comparative Method; that Origin means history; and that the history of morals means the description, anthropological and psychological, of the relations which a certain group of interacting spiritual, quasi-physical, and (if we find that it pays *ethically* to go so far back) even physical forces have displayed during such time as the process in question has actually lain open to what may be termed in the broadest sense 'historical' observation.

(*b*) The no less uncompromising champion of Validity may be portrayed in a sentence. He is probably an idealist; but, for all that his metaphysical prepossessions ought to lead him to distinguish between 'present' and 'ideal' worth, he has nevertheless conceived a violent prejudice in favour of Things-as-they-are.

With him we must gently reason thus. "Are not moral intuitions good in the good man, but, in the case at least of the impenitently bad man, are they not bad? Granted, if you will, that our intuitions are bound to outrun any power we may have of testing and verifying their effects. But what of our generation? Suppose that you who are good and I who am bad have stuck to our intuitions on the whole through life for better and worse respectively, will the object-lesson we afford be wholly lost on society? Does society frame its moral standard by blindly compounding a mass of intuitions? Surely the very intermingling of moral natures must, as it were, generate thought. Whatever its members as individuals may do, society at least is sure to display *some* approach to 'intelligence without passion'—*some* capacity for impartially assigning effects to their apparent causes. But here we have a kind of moral philosophy in the making; and

its compiler, society, by no means deaf to historical considerations. Clearly, then, it is our duty as moralists to recognise the existence of this Ethics of common sense. Nay more, it is our one and sufficient duty, by contributing method in the shape of a wider inductive survey and closer reasoning, to make it into an Ethics that truly deserves the name."

§ 14. Now in what direction do these inchoative conclusions and criticisms point? Will they not serve to give us an inkling both of what sort of synthesis we are likely to achieve, and of how we must proceed so as to achieve it?

(*a*) Firstly, then, as regards the sort of synthesis, or compromise, in prospect. Our recent conclusions are suggestive in the following way. Origin, we decided, was history, or performance up to date. Validity, on the other hand, seemed to stand for a more or less intuitive perception of the worth of certain moral principles 'in themselves'; which perception, however, though immediately it tended to express itself as a feeling or sentiment, yet might be regarded as to some extent embodying the results of a previous acquaintance with the history of the moral experiments of mankind. At the same time we were made aware of the extreme indirectness of the process whereby this knowledge came to exert an influence on the conduct of the individual. It looked as if his wisest policy on the whole was to rest—provisionally, as it were—on his intuitions. But we may be sure that, *if* the facts of life, subjective and objective taken together, show it to be, and to have ever been, his wisest policy to put the logic of feeling before the logic of history, the science which aims at rationalising morality will have to pronounce the policy and the logic that guides it in the strictest sense of the term *reasonable*. No doubt, as we saw, the social consciousness is in a manner capable on its own account of elucidating the conditions of moral conduct. Nay more, it seemed to do this in so impersonal and objective a way as hardly, one might suppose, to include amongst these the condition involved in this need

and inclination on the part of the individual moral agent to trust to his intuitions. The social consciousness, however, is something that exists *between* members of society who before they are anything else are 'persons.' Hence it cannot, in virtue of its own impersonality, undertake to ignore a condition that applies, if not collectively, yet distributively and individually, to those socially-minded persons for whom it legislates, namely the need and inclination felt by every moral subject to interpret the moral life from within itself rather than by reference to its circumstances. All of which would seem to hold good *ethically*, whether as metaphysicians we choose to call this tendency 'provisional' in view of some anticipated apotheosis of the mere understanding, or prefer to regard the priority of the intuitive to the discursive reason as from every point of view final for the human spirit.

Thus a first glance would seem to indicate that an intuitionism, tempered by critical reflection, yet characteristically and predominantly an intuitionism, is the Ethics natural and proper to man. So much for the claims of Validity. On the other hand, the expert investigator of moral Origins would likewise seem to have plenty to do. His function is to be editor-in-chief of that 'critique of moral confidence,' apart from which such confidence is indistinguishable from mere rashness. The moral subject does not walk by faith because faith is blind, but, on the contrary, because, purblind as it is, it is yet the most long-sighted of his mental powers.

(*b*) Secondly, as regards method. The criticisms of the previous section foreshadowed a simple, and, I hope, adequate, plan of procedure. They showed us that we are dealing with two parties, each of which has been led by its own 'irreconcilables' to overstate its case. Evidently, then, our policy as would-be arbitrators is, so to speak, to summon mass-meetings of each party in turn. Face to face with their pretensions, let us try to reason away whatever therein seems excessive. Could this be done, the formality of a final adjudication ought not to delay us long.

To particularise, let us first confront the 'evolutionary' inquirers into Origin with the 'facts,' and ask them whether their working hypotheses do not practically fail to account for the almost unconditional Validity of certain of the 'higher'—more 'spiritual'—moral motives. Then, on the other hand, let us contrive such a version of the rights of Validity as shall secure it undisputed primacy, and yet not absolute immunity from all control, direct or indirect, on the part of the study of Origins. It will thereafter but remain to draw up some sort of balance-sheet of concessions given and received, in order to determine for each principle its legitimate share of authority in morals.

V. Mere Origin as an Ethical Standpoint

§ 15. That there are evolutionists and evolutionists is being gradually recognised, even by those who are disposed to distrust all alike that arrogate to themselves this title. For our present purpose, however, they must revert to all the inconveniencies of close companionship. In regard to morals, at least, let them be treated as being of one mind. To the ethical portions of the *Descent of Man* and to the *Data of Ethics* let there be ascribed a common faith, the faith of naturalism, and a common set of working principles, the principles of natural selection, of the association of ideas, and so forth. Possibly injustice will hereby be done to the individuals concerned (though of individuals, if only for reasons of space, there will be little mention for good or ill). But this is to be condoned on account of the greater 'objectivity' that may by this means be given to something that can only be described as an 'atmosphere'—an atmosphere thick with metaphysical *bacilli* which the average man of science (is he not used to vitiated atmosphere?) breathes with comfort doubtless, but not perhaps without a certain cost.

The evolutionists that I have in my eye—the extremists of whom I would present a composite impression—may be charged with subscribing to some form

of that moral philosophy to which Mr. Spencer has given the question-begging name of 'rational utilitarianism.'[1] In support of such a position they are wont to bring forward an array of evidence which (in my opinion at least) would be sufficiently convincing, were it but strictly relevant. Nature, they assert, that is, physiological nature, is wholly given over to an 'unconscious utilitarianism'—understanding here by 'utility' the quality of making simply for survival. It is, for instance, in view of this 'biological end' (for these naturalistic philosophers are prodigal of psychological metaphor) that protective mimicry produces the leaf-pattern on the butterfly's wing. The whole essence of instinct, in short, consists in this its function of protectiveness. Its be-all and end-all is to modify the play of the vital forces to the profit of the organism in its struggle for existence.

Well, suppose we grant this. Suppose we say that, regarded as an 'empirical law,' the generalisation fairly fits the 'facts.' *Ethically*, however, the crux of the utilitarian argument does not, and can not, lie here. Why forsooth must we take the alleged 'law' for more than it is logically worth? We have been presented with certain 'facts'—certain things that *are*, and moreover *are* in virtue of physiological nature being what it is. But why therefore conclude, as if the parity of reasoning were unquestionable, that utilitarianism, in the sense of the pursuit of sheer survival, provides the 'law' (*i.e.* policy, not generalised observation) that *ought* to govern the conscious nature of man?

"At any rate a most familiar crux," says the naturalistic philosopher. "The things that *are* and the things that *ought* to be—the inevitable 'ditch.' But we have not the smallest intention of jumping it, because we do not want to get across. There is fairly firm walking-ground on our side. On the other side—well, our friends who are after Free Will, the Absolute, and so on, may be standing still in order to think better,

[1] Cf. *Data of Ethics*, § 21.

but they certainly do not seem to be getting *on*."—"But we," let us answer, "are with *you* on *your* side of the ditch. With you we entrust ourselves to the 'facts'; and would inquire with you whether they *all* point one way."

§ 16. For there are, or have been, those loftily unpractical metaphysicians who would declare that to reason from the 'is' of empirical science to the 'ought' of normative Ethics is nothing short of a paralogism. That free or unconditioned will has alone the right to pronounce the 'ought' is, they would contend, an axiom. Which axiom rests on *a priori* grounds of proof. Wherefore it is bound to remain wholly unaffected by any merely phenomenal evidence of a 'trend,' be it physiological or psychological, in human nature.

But they are at best but dubious allies of Validity that thus seek to cut it off 'as if with a hatchet' from Origin. Moreover, whilst their talk makes for unconditional dualism, they live (like the rest of us) a life of distracted monism. The 'ought' of their practice gives the lie to the absolute 'ought' of their books. To their concrete consciousness (for are not they, even as we are, human?) the 'ought' of practical life is a unity qualified by an inner diversity. It is two things at once—subject to actual warring experiences, and assertive of a *de jure* authority to combine these under a law. No, there is almost more hope for that other apriorist Mr. Spencer, who, if he renders 'ought' completely superfluous by treating it as the empty subjective echo of an inflexible objective 'is,' at any rate errs in the cause of synthesis. And even cocksure materialistic synthesis is better than the dualism that spells philosophic despair.

Let us, then, stick to our initial resolve to be experimental. Let us entrust ourselves to the guidance, uncertain though it needs must be, of a critical empiricism. For us there shall be a psychological 'ought' that is no less empirical fact in its way than the uncompromising 'is' of instinct. We shall frankly admit it as part of our working hypothesis with regard to moral obligation that certain determinations 'from without' do as a matter of

'fact' form a moment in it. On the other hand, we shall no less frankly assume on the strength of 'appearances'—on the testimony of consciousness, to wit—that we are also able to some extent to determine our own courses. Such a double-edged provisional view is not dualism, but its antidote. It postulates no ultimate incompatibility, but rather foreshadows eventual convergence. Origin and Validity, if ever they are to fight it out and be friends, must first be given the chance of meeting on common ground. And then by all means—*αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.*

§ 17. It will perhaps be objected, however, that *some* evolutionists at all events are quite ready 'at a certain level of thought' to recognise this duality in unity of the psychological 'ought'; that, in particular, a distinction which opposes the psychological effects of 'natural' to those of 'conscious' selection is finding its way into current sociology.

Quite so. The distinction is there. But is it used? It is old enough, indeed, to have borne fruit. For it goes back as far as Bagehot—that most level-headed of the exponents of Development. Already in *Physics and Politics* we find the contrast drawn between the savage mind, "tatooed all over" with its indelible unalterable notions, and the mind of one living in the "age of discussion," who can put off the old man in favour of the new almost as readily as he can change his coat. But in the mouths of Bagehot's successors the distinction survives as a vague platitude. (After all, what can be vaguer than current sociology?) Or worse, where Bagehot employed a few picturesque expressions to differentiate the two stages of a continuous evolution, the solemn parade of a technical antithesis now gives the suggestion of an absolute separation. 'The savage is selected, the civilised man selects'—this is the sort of statement we read, or might read any day.

But it is just this kind of phrase-making with a hatchet that is *not* wanted in comparative psychology. For, when we speak of the effects of 'natural' as opposed

to those of 'conscious' selection, what ought we to mean? Surely, the pure instincts. But every genuine student of social and moral origins knows that, as far as the pure instincts are concerned, he is, for the practical purposes of his science, as far off from them when dealing with the savage as when dealing with civilised man. For example, the analogies between the habits of animals and the customs of the most backward native of Australia prove so faint as to cast no light at all on any of the *special* developments within the moral nature of the latter. The savage is no automaton. He reveals more 'inwardness' the more closely he is studied. Doubtless, however, he differs from his civilised brother in being *relatively* unselective. He too has his principles. But they come to him early in life, and, when they come, they come to stay. Hence Nature tends to deal with his heresies somewhat after the manner of a Spanish inquisitor. She gets at the heresy through the heretic. But with civilised man the inquisitorial method of conversion is on the whole a failure. One martyr makes many proselytes. Principles have, as it were, made themselves independent of persons. Consequently they must be acquitted or condemned on their own merits by a jury of their peers. Or, to vary the metaphor, the struggle for existence is transferred from civilised mankind to his ideas. The ideas fight, and the civilised individual, being 'adaptable,' finds salvation by consorting with the winner. But the most primitive 'Why-why' is also reflective and 'adaptable'—at any rate in regard to the smaller matters of life. Generally and on the whole, he too is the self-determining man, and not the animal which is determined. The presumable instincts of some far-off progenitor cannot, by the most ardent advocate of 'parallelism' as a principle of constructive psychology, be said to have reproduced themselves at all directly or exactly in the sentiments and ideas that 'react'—as the phrase is— upon his conduct. These instincts may, or may not, in some metaphysical sense have been gradually 'translated' into terms of consciousness. The translation,

however, is at any rate of so free a description that the working psychologist is bound to distinguish, and to rate at a certain value of its own, the peculiar contribution of the translating mind.

What, then, *is* wanted in the comparative psychology of morals? The answer is obvious—"Not question-begging terminology, but question-solving research." For ours is the empirical 'level of thought'; and the empiricist has no business to decide *a priori* whether a man's sense of Validity enables him wholly or in part to guide himself, or whether Origin (in the naturalistic sense of instinct), operating 'subliminally' as a *vis a tergo*, does all the guiding for him. He must put aside extreme metaphysical views, such as that all consciousness is mere 'epiphenomenon,' or, contrariwise, that all consciousness as such involves selectiveness in the sense of spontaneity. His business is to go to the facts—to let *them* speak for themselves. Now his facts are *prima facie* all of a piece, in that they are all alike psychical. On the other hand their import is ambiguous, some making for determinism, others for freedom. Hence he is bound to work in the first instance on the hypothesis of a duality in unity. He must concede the possibility of there being two moments in the moral nature, a 'fatal' and a 'free.' And he must try his best to disentangle these two threads, when analysing a given 'mixed state' of consciousness, by means of such empirical tests as the appearances themselves suggest.

When, however, we would seek for enlightenment on this, or any other, point in psychological histories of moral evolution, behold none worthy of the name are in existence! Who, then, shall blame us if as irresponsible essayists we venture in a fragmentary way to anticipate the tenor of such an investigation?

§ 18. Let us, then, first consider the case of a specific development throughout which the leading part would seem to be played by the 'fatal' moment in our moral nature.

When the savage embarks on matrimony he is moved

thereto by a considerable variety of converging 'causes'—to use a neutral term. In the background, according to the evolutionist, there must be postulated as most 'original' cause of all a mating instinct. This, of all 'deferred' instincts, is, he maintains, the most complex. It embraces diverse moments, the 'objects' of which range from the mere gratification of appetite, or of a jealous desire for 'sexual appropriation,' to the cherishing, feeding, housing, and protecting, of wives and offspring. All this, however, is in the background. The practical anthropologist knows of instinct only as a hypothetical something that has precipitated and particularised itself in a mass of customs. These customs, no doubt, are relatively—but only relatively—'blind.' It is true that, for example, the time and mode of his marriage are virtually predetermined for the tribesman. But to say that imitation and tradition 'insensibly' put their special, and, as it were, local, stamp on the plastic congenital tendency is either to speak in a metaphor, or to go beyond the facts. It were indeed far truer to say that a specifically social consciousness, though of a rudimentary kind, has already come into play. Nor are higher manifestations of its influence far to seek. Marriage custom as supported either by an actively persecuting public opinion, or by a system of gentile vendetta encouraged by public opinion, is nascent law. Or again, disasters, whether coincidental or causally connected, attending the violation of marriage custom concur with various other grounds and occasions of belief in a supernatural principle to reinforce ancestral usage with the authority of religion. And though, as compared with law, religion may be somewhat capricious in its choice of a social cause to champion, yet as often as it happens to take the side of salutary practice, it is probably the more effectual 'pro-ethical sanction' of the two. Further, with the coming into being of such legal and religious ordinances—which, as a rule, will coincide in their injunctions, as for instance when they jointly prohibit marriage within the kin, or with certain kinsfolk—there must correspondingly arise (the evolutionist at

any rate cannot disallow this appeal to his 'law of association') prudential considerations in the breast of the individual. Which considerations, i must be admitted, constitute integral factors in a social consciousness, seeing that in respect to the conduct they enjoin, though not as regards the motive they allege, they are actually on a par with ethical judgments proper. Nor indeed are indications lacking of the existence of distinctively ethical sentiments and ideas on the subject of love and marriage in the minds of the most backward savages known to anthropology. Two illustrations must suffice. Let us note how such deliberate and solemn pronouncements as the 'ten commandments' at initiation or the wedding-address—not to mention the thousand folk-tales and proverbs that lightly flit from mouth to mouth—exalt the virtues of the good husband for their own sake and 'in themselves,' that is, as simply fine and admirable. Or again, let us note how the rhapsodies of the love-sick swain (though doubtless apt to be tinged with a more or less delicate sensuality—such as appears so frequently in their modern counterpart!) yet are found likewise to profess a tenderness and disinterestedness of affection that argues the presence of a certain ethical ideal amongst the incentives of courtship.

§ 19. Well (taking for what it is worth this perfunctory sketch of a vastly complex development), what are we to make of the 'causes' alleged? Do they make on the whole for determinism, or do they make on the whole for freedom? On the face of them all the causes are alike psychical. Some are ethical, the rest are (in Mr. Spencer's phrase) 'pro-ethical.' If a non-ethical determinant, namely instinct, lurk in the background, it must be discovered by the flavour of 'Origin' that it imparts to its effects in consciousness. Perhaps the adherent of Validity exclaims: "If the claimant cannot appear in person, surely the case goes by default."—No, as empirical psychologists, we have decided to hear him through his representatives. If, however, these halt and hesitate in their report, that is *his* look-out.

Let us allow, then, in regard to these causes, that, although all are alike in being psychical, and even, in a broad sense, purposive, they form a mass of ambiguous appearances. In the case of some the 'biological end' of sheer survival seems 'really' to be subserved. In the case of others the enhancing of the worth of life seems sufficient motive 'in itself.' Sometimes the (assumed) primordial instinct seems directly reproduced in the conscious tendency. Sometimes it seems replaced by something independently authoritative. Nor is the ambiguity noticeable merely when we look at the facts of consciousness 'from the outside.' When we look into ourselves it feels at times as if we were half unconsciously shaping our policy to suit our instinctive leanings, at other times as if we were compelling those leanings to subordinate themselves to our sense of worth and right.

Let us, therefore, give the naturalistic thinker a fair hearing when he pleads for 'original' survival-seeking bias as the predominant moment in man's career as a domestic being. Let us even put up with such exaggerations as there may be in the statement of his case. When the most that he can affirm is a relative predominance, and no definite criterion of predominance is to hand, the literary device of 'colouring' may not unpardonably be employed as a scientific make-shift.

§ 20. "The moral sentiment," we shall suppose our evolutionist to argue, "which makes itself felt in the domestic virtues, is on the whole and predominantly but the slavish echo of a congenital tendency. With this tendency the sentiment in question is doubtless out of harmony at times. To that extent, however, it is out of harmony with man's real and abiding welfare—to wit, the welfare that consists in surviving and causing to survive. The home life of savages may present forbidding features to the idealisers of love and marriage. Their semi-instinctive customs, nevertheless, are capable of sustaining a breed of hardy, and so presumably happy, men. Nor does the civilised man, for all that he may be shocked to hear it, depart

far from the ways of his remote forebears when bent on founding a family. With him as with them love is mostly 'blind.' Reasons, moral or otherwise, fail on the whole to affect it. Civilised love pays little conscious attention to material, and less to physiological, considerations touching the future. Nor can it even be affirmed that a coldly rational matrimonial policy when tried has been found to pay. Nor would any one maintain that the schemes of marriage reform propounded by the wise have redounded to their credit. Or once more, is it not significant what little prominence is given in the writings of the moralist to the canons of domestic duty—understood in any broad and scientific sense? To marry 'well' is hardly reckoned amongst the cardinal virtues. And why? Because the trend of instinct renders ethical precept on this head practically superfluous. You say you are free. You say that 'follow Nature' in our sense of 'Nature' cannot serve as a general rule of life. That may be, or may not be. At any rate, however, you must admit that, in respect to marriage, Nature, unwilling that the preservation of the race should depend on the fluctuations of opinion as to the merits of this or that ideal, has made what is virtually a saving-clause in the charter of freedom you suppose her to have bestowed on man. 'Follow Nature,' in fact, in regard to marriage, is a rule that is capable of satisfying prudence and conscience alike. It is not in point to reply that various pro-ethical and ethical sanctions have a perceptible 'reactive' effect on the family life of the veriest savage. These influences are 'really' effective only in respect to the choice of means. The supreme end of race-propagation is 'given' all along. And it is no less 'given' when it is somehow represented within the field of conscious attention than when it operates occultly as a pure biological force. You may insist, if you will, on the ideal possibilities rather than on the actual achievements of conscious selection in this connection. But harp as you will on the intrinsic reasonableness of some Platonic marriage-machine that shall knit woof and warp together

according to the principles of an enlightened psychology,[1] you cannot make out much of a case for the superiority of man's to primal nature's ways. As far as the history of marriage goes, our evolutionary utilitarianism with its doctrine that sheer survival is the 'real' standard of the good stands approved by your practical failure to point in this case to a self-supporting spiritual motive that *works*—that puts itself prominently at the head of affairs, and justifies its position in consciousness by the felt excellence of its peculiar fruits."

And now as impartial judges let us give ear to the other side.

§ 21. The upholder of conscious selection may be supposed to open his reply by remarking that his opponent has considerably underrated the 'reactive' effects of such forces as religion and morality on love and marriage; that, consequently, he will set forth with all due regard to the claims of history the development of a principle—the principle of Purity—which has precisely this appearance about it, that, whether ultimately a product of natural selection or not, it has at any rate cut itself entirely free from instinct, and acquired the position of an independent self-feeding focus of moral energy.

The sense of moral purity, according to the evolutionist, is the outcome of taboo. How taboo itself arose, however, he is hardly able to explain. Why should man 'in the beginning' by force of instinct have avoided contact with certain things by no means always palpably noxious or unclean in themselves? And why—when all allowance is made for the sanctioning power of custom, that 'instinct to conserve instincts'—was this special kind of avoidance made so absolute, so invincibly will-compelling, by the world-wide sentiment of the race?

It will be said—and perhaps, historically speaking, not without good reason—that awe of the Uncanny is in the main responsible for this attitude of 'reverential detestation' on the part of the savage towards so much that he need but understand to appreciate and use. But what naturalistic

[1] Cf. Plato, *Politicus*, 310.

explanation will account for the existence and power of this mystic awe? The follower of Darwin will doubtless be content to describe it as a 'by-product' of the growth of the intellect. But is this any explanation at all? Is it not merely a curt restatement of the fact to be explained? This fact is that certain manifestations of mind to which the evolutionist cannot ascribe any function—that is, which do not seem to him to subserve directly and in themselves the so-called 'ends' of natural selection—do nevertheless persist by the side of other activities which he regards as palpably furthering survival. All that 'by-product' does, therefore, is to mask the gratuitous assumption that some 'latent affinity' compels the two groups of phenomena, the useful and the useless, to stand or fall together. 'By-product,' in short, represents but the colourless negation of a *raison d'être*—presumably designed as a counterfoil to the teleological view that the so-called by-product exists and persists on the strength of the promise it contains, in other words, of its eventual destination. "But no," replies the evolutionist; "'by-product' has doubtless its metaphysical implications of a nature unfavourable to teleology, but it likewise has its strictly scientific use. It serves to mark the actual, though possibly unexplained, connection between a *particular* form of 'irrational quantity' and a *particular* race-preserving tendency. Thus for example, the mystic horror which the savage displays towards a corpse or towards an issue of blood may be connected by the use of a notion such as 'by-product' or 'overflow' with that definitely protective instinct which warns him, or at any rate warned his ancestors, of the proximity of death and danger. These taboos, in short, fall into line with what the biologist knows as 'cases of misapplied instinct.'[1] Nature works on a system of averages, and has to allow for a margin of error." To all of which the champion of Validity replies that expressions such as 'by-product,' 'overflow,' and 'misapplied instinct' may have a certain designatory value, but that their explanatory value is *nil*.

[1] Cf. Darwin, *Descent of Man*, i. 3 *ad fin.*

"Meanwhile," he continues, "is it not at all events a far cry from these questionable rudiments to that sentiment of moral purity which in the heart of civilised man calls aloud (with so much, be it admitted, of the solemn insistence of primitive taboo) for the scrupulous avoidance in thought and word and deed of all that by the aid of its own self-attested standard it judges to be morally contaminating and abominable? Doubtless the evolutionist will be forward with his 'explanation'—to wit, his mere 'exterior history'—of the transition. He will tell us, for example, that lustration was first of all adopted as a means of 'drowning the infection'—at this point, probably, already conceived as literally a 'spiritual' infection; and that afterwards, not so much by analogy as by a direct extension of scope, lustration and the lustral idea came to be applied to the cleansing of 'sin,' namely the infection derived by contact (at first including even involuntary contact) with certain impure things, as, for instance, bloodshed. But, granting the plausibility of this 'exterior history,' where do we find in it any explanation of the fact that man's sense of purity has shaken itself free of its back-history in becoming rational and ethical? Taboo is virtually irrational. It may indeed in a secondary way further tribal survival by strengthening pre-existing habits of self-discipline. But primarily, directly, intrinsically, of its own right as an independent institution, it has no utilitarian function of this or any other kind to which the adherent of mere Origin can refer us. Taboo may provide the holy water. But it does not provide the sentiment that puts the water to a moral use."

§ 22. Perhaps the time has scarcely come for us to attempt to arbitrate between the rival pleaders. But it certainly would seem as if in his concluding question the supporter of Validity offers something of a poser to the rational utilitarian. "Whence," he asks him, "is this sentiment of the *moral value* of Purity, this appreciation of the *virtue* that 'holiness' imparts?" To which the only possible reply forthcoming from the side of Origin must

be somewhat as follows. "Ethical sentiment at first grew strong within its proper nursery, the field of domestic and tribal co-operation. Then it proceeded to moralise religion, art, and the various other intellectual superfluities that man had found time to enjoy, or groan under, by the way. This moralisation imparted to these latter as it were an entirely fresh dose of life. Thus, though useless as regards their original proclivities, they have been actually enabled to enrol themselves amongst the factors which make for the survival of civilised man."

But these superfluities that turn out by a 'chance' not to have been superfluous after all—are they 'natural,' even according to the working hypothesis which the evolutionist makes concerning 'Nature'? Surely it is putting a considerable strain on the 'Happy Accident theory' to call upon it to account, not merely for 'spontaneous variations,' but likewise for the 'spontaneous' persistence of all sorts of superfluities. These obliging 'sports' of nature persevere in their being although there is no 'biological end' for them to serve. Then lo and behold, one day the moral consciousness awakes to the fact of their existence, and does them the supererogatory favour of providing them with an ideal end!

We are not called upon here to decide whether the naturalistic 'explanation' of the genesis of the idea of moral purity is metaphysically possible or impossible—whether it is metaphysically conceivable or not that 'external nature,' like man, is capable of indulging in sports and slips, and then of making up the lost ground by subsequently turning them to useful account. Our concern here is entirely with the balance of empirical probability. We have left behind us that serene, if barren, region of philosophy where all compromise between the claims of Matter and Mind is on *a priori* grounds forbidden. We are allowing that some of our propensities may bear as it were automatically on simple race-preservation, whilst others again may possess as ideal and spiritual motives of conduct a validity of their own. And we are appealing to Origin in the sense of history

for the means of verifying, or refuting, our working hypothesis.

Such, then, being our method, let us be the less ready to conspire offhand with the adherent of mere Origin—of the theory that the 'unconscious utilitarianism' of outer nature is the *real* force at work in the moral consciousness —to conceal what even he must allow to be gaps, inevitable, perhaps, but still gaps, in an otherwise plausible argument. If the history of the idea of moral purity 'appears' to testify to the moralisation, by a free act on the part of our spiritual nature, of an unmoral and purposeless taboo, then, putting aside for the moment all metaphysical prepossessions, let us allow that the balance of empirical probability is in favour of the spontaneous origination of a specific ideal by the mind. And so too, if previously it appeared that the evolutionary historian of the development of love and marriage made out his case, let us be prepared to admit as regards another specific 'end' that the mind was on the whole but passively re-affirming what the animal nature had predetermined.

§ 23. It would occupy too much space, were even the evidence available, to proceed on these lines to examine the human virtues one by one with the object of dividing them, according as a 'fatal' or a 'free' moment seemed to predominate in their constitution, into 'natural' and 'spiritual'—or whatever we are to call those of them which on the hypothesis of an all-controlling struggle for bare existence have to be regarded as more or less unessential and adscititious. Indeed, were it possible thus to deal with them on their individual merits, it is exceedingly probable that we should soon be driven to abandon this method of hard-and-fast contrast in favour of some more discriminative mode of treatment. As it is, however, we must work to suit our limitations. The most we can attempt, before proceeding to sum up on the question of the value of mere Origin as an ethical standpoint, is a rough classification of the virtues under heads as determined by their history, and a wholesale characterisation of the prevailing purport of each group according

as it tends to emphasise the one or the other kind of end, the 'natural' or the 'spiritual.'

Regarded as matter of history the virtues seem naturally to fall into five groups—the Domestic, the Tribal or National, the International, the Personal, and the Transcendental. Of course this, as any other classification of the kind, must be pronounced 'artificial' in the sense that it is nothing but a piece of student's apparatus. If it has a principle behind it, however, it is this eminently natural and historical principle, that, speaking very broadly, this arrangement of the virtues corresponds with the order of their appearance in time. Some sort of incoherent family life comes first; then through the clan something worthy of the name of tribe is reached; then synœcism, intermarriage, trade, religious proselytisation, and, not least of all, war itself break down the hostile barriers between people and people; then, comparatively late in the day, the unit (who before was but a fraction) 'finds himself'; and, latest of all, the aspirations of certain of the most unitary of the units towards the highest kind of individuality lead them to sacrifice everything to this, or some closely allied, ideal principle.

If, then, we accept for working purposes this classification of the virtues into five groups, we shall find that the first two groups appear on the whole to subserve the 'natural' end of race-preservation, and the two last to make for a 'spiritual' self-perfection, whilst the remaining group presents intermediate features.

§ 24. Of the Domestic virtues we have heard something already, though we were not allowed to notice in any detail the many-sided nature of the influence they exert on race-preserving conduct, as notably, for instance, when they pave a way for the advent of the National virtues by the promotion of gentile solidarity. Affection, dutifulness, respect, fidelity, and so forth, as between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and generally as between all those who are bound together by 'kindly' (that is, kin-ly) relations, are to all appearance

the outcome of a single 'natural' impulse; which impulse, if it undergo considerable modification in respect to the channels along which it flows as the 'control' of consciousness increases, yet at all events would seem to keep fairly true to its assumed 'original' destination, the maintenance of a healthy and fertile breed of men. No doubt there are certain changes which go near to affecting its main character. For example, as, with the development of the National virtues, society grows more widely coherent, the mutual support of the whole brotherhood of blood-relations becomes less and less essential to the prosperity of each separate household; so that the function of the family 'instinct' is to this extent curtailed. Or again, as there is gradually developed a refined sense of the claims of personality, the 'utilitarian' aspects of marriage tend to fade into the background, and romantic love as between 'kindred souls' comes to assert itself under favourable circumstances as truly an 'end in itself.' To which, however, the supporter of the theory of the predominating 'natural' fatality may not without some reason reply that, in the former case, one instinct is but foregoing a part of its dominion in order to make room for another, whilst, as regards the latter case, he may urge that the exigencies of 'spiritual love' do not at any rate tend seriously to interfere with the workings of the underlying physiological cause.

§ 25. Again, it is a colourable view that the National virtues, no less than the Domestic, must be ranked amongst the indispensable conditions of a persistent society regarded simply as a kind of 'natural' organism. The traces are apparent in man of a 'social instinct,' which, by bringing about a devotion to common interests, a friendliness of intercourse, and a willingness to give and take, converts the state into a compact body, capable as such of asserting itself with success as against competing associations. Patriotism, good-fellowship, and justice (not to mention in their detail the virtues subordinate to these three, whereof loyalty, charity, and honesty are severally examples) would seem to be the triple historical outcome

of what—to borrow Kipling's phrase—may be called the 'pack-law' of the social animal—

> As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk the Law runneth forward and back—
> For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.

Doubtless, however, the history of these virtues has its other side. The spirit of patriotism as exalted in the self-sacrifice of a Decius almost touches the Transcendental virtues. The refinements of social intercourse, as interpreted, for instance, by Aristotle in his analysis of the 'elegant virtues,' seem to take their place less naturally amongst the objects of an 'art of living' than amongst those of an 'art of living well.' Or once more, justice, the sympathetic respect for another's 'rights,' surely presupposes as a condition of the sympathy a 'sense of rights' on the part of the individual such as lies at the root of the Personal virtues. Allowing for all this, however, on the ground that our present contrast of tendencies is admittedly a drastic expedient, let us concede to the party of mere Origin that perhaps the character which shows uppermost in this group, when everything has been taken into account that tells the other way, is still that of 'preliminary virtues'—appliances of group-survival, without which man must live 'cyclopically,' nay, in such a condition of chaotic atomism that, as the *Jungle Book* suggests, not even *homo homini lupus* would any longer be predicable of such a being.

§ 26. To attempt to represent the Personal virtues, that is, the various forms of commendable self-respect, as altogether lacking a 'natural' base would be, of course, to break off all communications with the allies of Origin. But this is precisely what, at our empirical 'level,' we can not, and must not, do. Let us, therefore, go so far as even to accept the theory that, of all the instincts proper to the biological organism, self-preservation is the most original. "For the individual organism," argue the defenders of this view, "is historically prior to the

social. It is true that the most rudimentary forms of life look like 'jellified republics.' But their constitution is not really political. Either the parts cohere, and the economy they compose is therefore to some extent physiologically 'internal,' and thus individual as against them. Or they tend to split off and become each an independent centre of vitality—once more the individual." Well, be this as it may, let us be prepared to allow that the socially respectable tendencies of man as self-regarding —the laudable ambitions, implanted in him by tradition and training no less than by instinct, to live, to love, to own, to enjoy, to be distinguished in his person, to be forcible in his personality—are in some degree, at all events, the historical outcome of that *nisus* to persist though it be at the expense of others, which all living matter manifests in one or another form.

But is this the only side—or the striking side—to the history of these virtues? Has not the original *nisus* in a most remarkable way 'translated' itself out of a mere 'will to live' into a 'will to live well?' "What does not bear on survival is by-product," is the curt answer of the upholder of natural selection. Well, we cannot discuss that 'explanation' here. At least, however, let us note that, in connection with the Personal virtues, 'Nature' would seem to allow the superfluous 'will to live well' considerable play. It is not the force and range of the human appetite for personal well-being that is, naturalistically, so unaccountable. It is rather the extraordinary extent to which that appetite, when circumscribed by a due regard for the similar appetites of others, can be indulged without prejudice, and yet without apparent assistance, to the struggle for bare existence. Most unaccountable fact of all from this—and indeed from any—point of view, man would seem actually capable of deliberately framing, and carrying out, the resolution to put an end to his life. But can this be regarded as mere exhaustion and pale extinction on the part of the natural propensity to persist? Is it not, rather, to all appearance the positive conquest of instinct by

something absolutely alien to it? How can instinct have generated that out of itself which from above, as it were, turns upon it and slays it? How can the stream rise *proprio motu* above its source?

§ 27. At precisely the other end of the moral scale to suicide we find the Transcendental virtues, and from them may hope to obtain a less ambiguous illustration of the power of the human will to prevail against Nature 'even to the death.' These virtues embody the aspiration towards a more or less unconditional perfection of existence—the 'life after God.' To the most refined spirits they appear to contain 'in themselves' the promise and foretaste of such a life. Holiness, pure unselfishness, the love of the ideal—these seem not so much to be 'of' the 'natural life' as 'above' it. Representing, then, as they do the supremest and maturest effort of morality to transcend itself, these virtues do not lend themselves readily to historical derivation, if 'history' is to mean biology. No doubt the biologist can point to plenty of instances of apparent self-devotion occurring in the animal world—the mother-bird that risks her life for her offspring, and so on. But does the parallel quite hold good—any more than that of the savage, or indeed the civilised man, who is prepared to die fighting for home and country? Does such bravery, save in rare and easily distinguishable cases, amount to 'devotion to principle'? It is by the lofty and broad ideality attaching to them as motives, rather than by any particular form of objective manifestation, that the Transcendental virtues make themselves known. Which essential ideality of theirs it is that indicates a close connection between their development and that of the higher forms of Personal virtue. For it is characteristic of them that, whereas they cause themselves to be pursued almost apart from considerations of personal or even national survival, they nevertheless, by the intense subjectivity of their appeal to the individual consciousness, tend to suggest a quasi-personal interest and value that is somehow able to outlast the phenomenal fact of death. "Simply the miser and his gold," says the evolutionary

associationalist. "Your 'martyr of conscience,' just like the suicide or any other kind of madman, is a victim of the *idée fixe*."—Perhaps. But this is at all events to put additional burthen on the theory that Nature in the sense of blind Chance stumbles along a mean of coincidences, and touches passing perfection in producing and preserving the 'average man.'

§ 28. The International virtues may be taken last in order on the ground that they present mixed features. Thus, on the one hand, the principle of 'synœcism' may be invoked in favour of a 'natural' explanation of their development. For, undoubtedly, it furthers group-survival that the *hospes* should under certain conditions be recognised in the *hostis*. The area of trade, marriage, military alliance, and so forth, being widened, the tribe is reinvigorated by the introduction of fresh blood and fresh ideas. On the other hand, a humanitarianism, which contemplates 'the parliament of Man' as an ideal possibility, and which, moreover, has borne actual fruit in such an act as the abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, has rather the appearance of a spontaneous creation on the part of our moral and rational nature. The alternative view presumably is that, in so far as humanitarianism does not 'assist natural selection' by serving as a specious cloak for national aggrandisement, it is an 'overflow,' and a dangerous kind of 'overflow' at that. A curious notion this, that Nature should grow ever more wild and freakish in her promptings as man feels himself to attain more nearly to steadfastness of ideal purpose and endeavour!

§ 29. And now to sum up on the subject of the value of mere Origin as a standpoint and starting-point of ethical explanation.

We have tried to look at matters from the point of view of Origin (understanding, however, by Origin, not any occult *fons emanationis*, but simply past history); and what do we find? Not by any means that the moral of the facts is unambiguous; much less that it is unambiguously in favour of the contentions of 'rational utilitarianism'—or, to give it the name it deserves,

'naturalistic utilitarianism.' For there was borne in upon us (by the help, it is true, of some very violent contrasts) the suggestion of a tendency superinducing itself upon a tendency—of a spiritual process growing out of a natural process, and yet modifying, and even transcending, it. It was far from appearing that survival (in the evolutionary sense of race-preservation) is the end that wholly, or on the whole, has weighed consciously with the successful type of man. On the contrary, it took some special pleading to show even that survival was the general motive presented in the 'preliminary virtues.' Thus the appearances seemed to tell, if anything, against the theory of 'rational utilitarianism,' so far as the latter might be supposed to base itself on experience proper, and, in its 'normative' capacity, to argue from a genuinely empirical 'is' to a no less empirical, that is, experimental, 'ought.' It was, however, fairly obvious all along that, in so far as it pretended to rest on history, 'rational utilitarianism' was a sham. Its appeal was never to veritable history, but to something conceived to lie at the back of history, namely, the 'is really' of an *a priori* metaphysical naturalism—something, therefore, no better, but, so far as it is given to masquerading, worse, than the confessedly *a priori* 'ought really' of the transcendentalist *intransigeant*. With *a priori* naturalism, then, considered as a 'method of origins' which offers to provide an ethical 'norm,' let us now shortly deal.

Evolutionary naturalism as a metaphysical theory of experience as a whole undertakes to formulate an all-embracing view of the facts of life. Needless to say, however, it finds this an excessively difficult thing to do. A certain pair of disparates, namely consciousness and biological process, it is quite at a loss to reconcile. Hence, unification being apparently beyond its reach, it has to resort to a *pis-aller*. It attempts simplification. It pronounces biological process the 'reality' and consciousness the 'appearance.' Its definition of life is that it is a conditional inheritability of bodily functioning. Its essence consists in the inheritability—the quality it has of allowing

itself to be handed on from generation to generation. Thus life is a sort of Athenian torch-race. The torch, which is consciousness of life, is a wholly decorative feature of the ceremony. For it cannot afford an incentive to the runners. Not merely has it no value in itself. It cannot even stand to them as the symbol of something else of value to them—as the symbol of a possible prize to be won.

Consciousness, then, being as such no conditioning element in the process it 'appears along with,' but its empty echo, all our valuations, seeing that they are necessarily 'for' a consciousness, are empty echoes too. Meanwhile naturalism has projected itself beyond consciousness. The tale runs that a despairing drill-sergeant once bade his awkward squad—"fall out and look at themselves." It is not added that they actually did so. Naturalism, however, has performed this precise feat. But it is seemingly more easy to project oneself beyond consciousness (*facilis descensus!*) than from beyond to project oneself back. To pass from this materialism to the formulation of an ethical norm—from the assertion that all valuations are superfluous to the pronouncement that one kind of valuation is, notwithstanding, better than another—demands of one the kind of intellectual back-somersault that is apt to land one anywhere and nowhere at once. Not thus, however, does it appear to naturalism. "Though we be but echoes," it says, "we must try to do the echoing properly. Now reality is persistence in time. Therefore persistence in time is what we *ought* really to aim at. For only consider! It is really that which we *are* aiming at all along—if we would but recognise the fact!" —But who can make anything of such a rigmarole?

§ 30. Naturalism, however, is not always of this uncompromising kind (though indeed the more rigorous form of the creed is popular enough). There is also naturalism the mere 'point of view.' Suppose, then, that a thinker of 'scientific' leanings puts his case thus. "I do not pretend to unify. I am content (as you have said) to simplify. I merely wish to see how far a 'biological

view' of life will carry me. I for one reckon existence as *the* condition of all good things. Well (metaphorically, if you insist), so does Nature. But Nature, according to biology (which no doubt, as you will remind me, is simplifying within its own sphere when it uses function as an evaluatory test), has its 'sports,' its purposeless by-products. Then why not consciousness too? Transferring my biological standard to Ethics, I ask: Are these idealistic excesses—"exultations, agonies"—of the moral consciousness, on which you have laid so much stress, useful, that is, favourable to the prolongation of man's existence on earth? If they positively interfere with this result, I for one vote that they go. If they neither hinder nor help, I say that they are not worth the serious attention of a truly practical man. If, however, they are of use, biologically speaking as it were—ah! that would be another matter altogether."

To which let us reply: "As tried by your test of 'function' (which, whether you allow it or not, harks back to the idea of reality as persistence in time), surely these excesses, as you are pleased to call them, of the moral consciousness are no purposeless accidents, since they are not eliminated as the race evolves, in the way that biological 'sports' are eliminated, but persist, nay flourish ever the more wantonly the farther man proceeds along the path of secular change."

Now doubtless there are more heroic ways in which philosophers have sought to rid themselves of such a foe. They have, for instance, refused on *a priori* grounds to regard goodness as in any way conditional—whether upon the maintenance of the bodily life, or otherwise. But we have chosen to meet the empiricist on his own 'level.' We have appealed to his own standard of reality—persistence in time. If, then, it turn out when the 'facts' are examined that certain moral sentiments and ideas, to which he cannot ascribe any *particular* race-preserving function (for it must be a particular and specific function if he is to conform to the requirements of biology), do nevertheless refuse to be eliminated, but persist and acquire

strength as they go, will he not admit that they have a *prima facie* empirical validity of their own? And suppose he do, will not he go a step farther?

We are not imputing to this upholder of naturalism in a modified form any definite materialistic creed. We do not ask him, therefore, to reconsider such a theory as that consciousness is an echo, an epiphenomenon, or what not, in favour of the view that consciousness may after all be capable of 'loading the dice'—of bringing about coincidences in a way that the mathematical doctrine of chances cannot warrant. We are only asking him to proceed a step farther at the same empirical 'level' that was adopted at the start. He is supposed to have allowed on the strength of the historical 'appearances' that a *prima facie* validity of their own attaches to certain 'spiritual' tendencies as distinguished from other 'natural' tendencies which have a use that is biologically obvious. Well, at this point—so far as history goes, so far as the standpoint of mere Origin serves him—he stops. There seems to be, historically speaking, so little to choose between the validity of the one, and the validity of the other, set of motives, that we obtain no unambiguous 'is' with which our experimental 'ought' may be brought to conform. We are left inquiring: Which of the two kinds of motive has, empirically and for us, the *higher* validity? Mere Origin, it seems, cannot tell us. But is there no supplementary test? The following, then, is the further step which we ask our friend of 'scientific' leanings to take with us: Will he stand by and offer us his criticisms whilst we consult our inner sense of Validity to see whether it can supply us with a moral criterion of a more nicely discriminative kind than mere Origin seems able to provide?

VI. Validity as an Ethical Standpoint

§ 31. Our farther step, it has been agreed with the upholder of naturalism as a mere point of view, must not take us beyond the empirical 'level.' In a sense, then, we can-

not leave history. We may have done with 'back-history' —with mere Origin. But there is also present history—the latest, still unfinished, chapter of the history of Man. Which latest chapter may, for our present purpose, be held to consist of psychological matter, and that mostly of the kind acquired by 'introspection.' Now introspection, paradoxical as it may sound, is essentially a historical method. The introspective psychologist as such undertakes to be 'scientific.' But this is to have already transcended the bounds of a purely 'solipsistic' interest in self. For by that resolve he commits himself to the task of observing what is psychologically common to himself and other persons. He is, as it were, chartered by himself and them to describe the appearance to itself of a typical mind of to-day; and, if he cannot make the 'personal equation,' it is simply bad introspection. Meanwhile, of course, all introspective work tends to wear a sort of 'solipsistic' colour on its surface. I naturally do not emphasise the all-pervading assumption that this of mine is also yours. For by that same assumption the direct proof or refutation of my assertions lies within your reach. Why, then, should you have your attention distracted from the facts described, by being forced to hear at the same time how I in some more or less indirect fashion have come to believe them to be the common property of our minds?

What power, then, has introspective psychology to assist us at the present juncture? It will be remembered that the back-history of the virtues appeared to present us with two classes of motive, the 'natural' and the 'spiritual,' both having a certain *prima facie* validity of their own, even as tried by naturalistic standards; and that, therefore, we felt ourselves driven to seek for some supplementary test that might yield us an unambiguous 'ought,' whenever (as in practice must constantly occur) the need should arise for us to set one kind of motive against the other, and, for better or worse, to choose between them. In search of which test we have proceeded from 'back-history' to 'present history.' What, then, does the latter tell us?

Surely this—that, *as empirical matter of fact, the moral consciousness of the normal individual of to-day bids him, in every case of conflict between principles, to choose the 'higher'; enables him immediately to distinguish in a general way between 'spiritual' and 'natural' principles; and, at the same time, teaches him to recognise the one kind as in itself of 'higher' validity than the other.*

Now this, I would maintain, or something yielding an analysis approximately the same,[1] is introspectively the fact. Nor have I any objection to restating the matter from a point of view more acceptable to the evolutionist. I am equally ready to maintain it to be the fact that the successful individual of a successful race to-day normally feels thus, and, what is more, that he normally tends to 'act up' to such a feeling.[2] I would even bargain with the evolutionary materialist and say that, if he will admit that these intuitional promptings form an important class of 'appearances' which he can neither incorporate within his system of utilitarian ethics nor explain away, I for my part am willing to concede as a bare possibility that the successfulness of that 'higher life' for which these promptings pave the way may after all in some unintelligible way be its 'biological reason.' But I insist, meanwhile, that the moral consciousness gives no hint that there is, or could be, any such reason at the back of these its most solemn injunctions. Nay more, I would add that, if any hint of the kind intrude itself from some extra-moral region of thought, a shock of moral revolt is the natural result.

§ 32. Nor does introspective psychology merely show us *that* these intuitional promptings speak the master-

[1] The reader may prefer Wundt's formulation of the law of "the hierarchy of moral ends," which runs as follows: "When norms of different orders contradict each other, that one is to be preferred which serves the larger end: social ends come before individual ends, and humanitarian ends before social ends" (*Principles of Morality* (trans. Washburn), p. 140).

[2] To much the same effect a recent popular work (which, however, loses sight of the 'person' in the member of society, and is thus restricted to taking an 'outside' view of human development) describes social evolution as "the progressive subordination of the present and the individual to the future and the infinite" (B. Kidd, *Principles of Western Civilisation*, p. 84).

word in morality. It can likewise show us in a manner *why*—that is, *how*—this is so. Let us revert to the plan of broadly colligating Validity with a kind of feeling and Origin (in the sense of the study of historical cause and effect) with a kind of thought. Considering this feeling and this thought in their relation to future action, let us name them respectively 'foretaste' and 'forecast.' Why, then, on the showing of introspection, is foretaste rather than forecast supremely effective as an authoriser of ethical conduct?

(*a*) Well, for one thing, it is matter of direct experience that will, though never merely strong, or the strongest, feeling, nevertheless depends on strong feeling as its proximate condition. Thinking, on the other hand, so far as it is no mere echo of passion, but 'real' thinking, that is, a process of discursive reasoning governed by its own laws, is 'cool.' Thus it is easy to see how 'the native hue of resolution' may be 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' The mind cooled down by thinking becomes, for the nonce at any rate, and permanently, if it dwell too long in the world of mere possibilities, disqualified for action. Discursiveness as such means diffusion of interest, dissipation and distraction of attention. As thought moves from symbol to symbol, each of these must in some degree be felt. Feeling, however, as such involves appetition. Which appetition, though it partly helps to further the action of thinking, is partly wasted by the way. Hence each fresh step in thought levies a tax on the by no means unlimited fund of volitional energy available for the time being. Contrast the forcibleness of intuition. It presents an object that is distinct, because relatively discontinuous with its psychical background, and capable therefore of seizing upon the whole man. It presents, not one amongst several bare possibilities, but a content hardly discrepant with, because so absolutely complementary to and continuous with, me-now—a 'to be' which even now almost 'is,' as the mental panorama is focussed to a vivid point and a burst of sanguine assurance heralds the consummating act of will.

(*b*) Further, let us note what forecast as such must mean for us as beings who desire to will reasonably, that is, so as to have the theoretical and the practical 'conscience' satisfied at once. A mere forecast, even though its framing involve a minimum of discursiveness, cannot, if taken as such, yield that sense of logical cogency which in the case of an abstract proof expresses itself as a feeling of conviction having close affinity to the feeling of moral obligation. So long as we are but striving to analyse the immediate, that is, any object so far as it presents itself to us as a self-contained whole having no 'other' that cannot be excluded for the nonce by the very act of mental objectification, we are subject to the feeling of logical necessity—of complete, if but temporary, satisfaction with our thought. In a case where we are forecasting, however, we are trying to argue from the present to the absent—from the known to the unknown. We are 'speculating,' in short, in the business-man's sense of the term. Hence, in proportion as we are aware of what we are about, we cannot but be haunted by a more or less lively presentiment of possible mistake and its consequences. It is not wholly or mainly from forecast, therefore, that there is born the confidence which can restore us to spiritual unity and set us free to 'identify ourselves' with the object of desire.

(*c*) Lastly, moral forecast as moral is liable to a special kind of ineffectiveness with which personal experience is likely to have acquainted us. The material out of which we shape a moral forecast must consist in part of facts relating to the nature of our own emotional leanings and likings. But knowledge 'of' or 'about' feelings is different from knowing, in the sense of experiencing, feeling as it is 'in itself.' Nay more, the available mental energy being at any moment limited, the one kind of experience is bound, temporarily at least, to override and outbid the latter. The sense of the feeling gives way to the sense of the logical relations of the concept whereby the feeling is represented. Reflection holding the attention, the feeling reflected on survives as but the

bloodless phantom of itself. But this deadness of sensibility produced in us by self-analysis is utterly out of place in the presence of a call to action. To pass to the state of mind wherein we are able to make the feeling integral to and effective in the object of desire requires the forcible revival of the desiccated image. This, however, is bound to put a great strain on the imagination; which strain cannot fail to communicate itself to the moral economy as a whole. How fatal, for example, it usually is to reason about the pleasures likely to accrue from a given course of action. As we dwell on the thought of them, they grow ever paler and more impalpable, till paralysing doubt assails us as to their worth—a doubt that probably, could we but know it, is not in the least justified by the actual condition of our power of enjoyment. How direct and infallible, on the other hand, is the suasion of moral foretaste. When intuition is allowed the upper hand in consciousness, what we feel at one moment is made the object of endeavour at the next, and never a chance is given to doubt and dally by the way.

§ 33. "Well and good," answers the 'rational utilitarian.' "I have no doubt that introspective psychology testifies in some such way as you have described to a certain ineffectiveness of moral reflection when unsupported by a vivid sense of what it feels like to be moral. But you prove too much. The blind obedience of the slave to an authority he is incapable of understanding exhibits a 'sanguine assurance' not a whit less effective—to say the least of it—than that which you suppose to be supremely authoritative in the normal moral consciousness. So I ask you to come one step farther. What so immediately effective as instinct? I am ready to admit, if you insist on it, that the application of the terms resulting from an analysis of human action to the kind of life or experience studied by the biologist is more or less metaphorical. But, seek as you will to expel the word 'instinct' from your psychological text-books, the fact has to be faced that certain deep-seated forms of natural trend determine the human will as (I contend) no mere ideal kind of

moral intuition has ever succeeded in doing, instilling absolute confidence by focussing the attention on strong physical feeling and on that alone. Instinct, then, by the showing of the very introspection on which you rely, is, as our naturalistic ethics also assumes, the pattern laid up, not in 'heaven,' but in those inmost recesses of our nature to which the mere consciousness has no direct access, whereto moral conviction must approximate in proportion as it is sound. The natural and not the ideal feelings just because they have more of the true intuitional flavour about them—more forcibleness and fatality—have the first call on our attention."

To which the champion of Validity may justly reply as follows. "Introspection supports history in testifying to the 'fact' that what you choose to call the instinctive 'will' is being steadily replaced, as civilisation and education advance, by a will of equal or greater energy that rests on the ideal feelings. It is useless for you to try to put back the hands of the clock. Inwardly and outwardly the appearances favour the view that spirit has come to stay. Construe the implications of this 'fact' as you will. Say, if you are not going to desert the working assumptions of evolutionism, that spirit stays merely because it pays—that its validity consists, not in what it seems to *be*, but in what it *does*. But at least admit as an empiricist that practically and for us it has intrinsic validity. When the bent of progressive man is towards attending more and more to what of itself seems to claim more and more of his attention, why bid him hand himself over by a sort of spiritual suicide, by an act of will-renouncing will, to an apparently decaying force, the very existence of which 'in'—we cannot rightly say 'for'—him is not a matter of direct consciousness at all? Naturalism? Why, it is rank *Un*naturalism."

§ 34. And now let us suppose the rational utilitarian, unable to convince us—and, let us hope, himself—that instinct is the prototype of the effective moral intuition of to-day, to fall back on his second line of defence. "Leaving instinct out of the question," he proceeds, "what of

authority? The savage is at the mercy of custom. *πάντων νόμος βασιλεύς.* Well, is the civilised man who trusts to his intuitions a whit more self-determining? Is not 'I will my station and its duties' a survival of barbarism? To put foretaste before forecast may be wise policy for the masses—for the white slave. But can intuition afford due scope for the exercise of a *reasonable* will? Utilitarianism, rationality, science—these go together, and together they determine human progress. The intuitionist may apply to himself the words which the immortal Silver addresses to his fellow-conspirators: 'We're all foc's'le hands. . . . We can steer a course, but who's to set one? That's what all you gentlemen split on, first and last.'"

"For look at the facts," he continues. "See what the despotism of foretaste involves in the matter of applied Ethics. What aptitude do the intuitionists show for tackling concrete problems? Their catalogue of particular virtues is a farrago of abstractions, destitute of all arrangement and inner consistency. And the farrago boasts an immutable nature. It descended wholesale from heaven at the time of the original 'spiritual influx'! Or at best, when evolutionism has made the fact of moral progress too patent to be any longer denied, some quibbling philosophy of 'type' and 'standard'[1] is requisitioned to explain how this precious pantheon of sacred forms does somehow condescend to adjust itself to our changing needs and uses."

"And all this comes of exalting foretaste at the expense of forecast—of dwelling on the 'quality' of moral action and leaving the 'reference' to settle itself. Mere feeling is only too prone to attach itself to this or that ideal, irrespectively of its bearing on the rest. Thus it is that a principle puts on 'unconditionality'—say, the principle of not lying to a murderer, for all that the lie might save the life of his intended victim. But the psychologist knows better than to respect the 'man of one idea,' the victim of 'mental obsession.' He is typically the lunatic."

[1] The allusion is to Lecky's *History of European Morals*, chap. i.

"Meanwhile, given sound political and social institutions, controlled by intelligent men who think for themselves, it will be for the best that intuitions, promulgated by authority, should govern the moral life of the uneducated. Since these cannot discover for themselves what is right, it remains that they should adopt the surest plan of bringing themselves to do what a superior wisdom decides to be to their advantage. For them let principles be as 'unconditional' as you please. Here is the opportunity for intuitionism. I am willing to concede—though unfortunately your inveterate intuitionist is not likely to set store by the concession—that reflection 'on a supposed right to tell lies from benevolent motives' is not for the uneducated. And, since the uneducated outnumber the educated by ten to one, I allow you that in nine cases out of ten a simple-minded concentration of sentiment on the beauty of truthfulness will best serve the cause of morality. For feeling, as you urge, is concentrative, calculation dispersive. The victim of ethical obsession, as compared with the puzzled blockhead who labours in the toils of a shillyshallying casuistry, is in the less parlous plight. The latter utterly fails to mobilise such moral powers as he has. The former at all events acts—acts immediately and strongly, though, apart from a wise authority in the background, not circumspectly. But Ethics proper is the concern of the educated. Show me if you can that an Ethics which puts foretaste before forecast is natural to the educated man whose highest aspiration it is to be self-determining—to exercise a *reasonable* will."

All of which lies open to a retort which, if it be necessarily somewhat *ad hominem*, is at all events hardly to be rebutted from the side of mere Origin. "Who are you that speak of rationality? You have to admit that a certain persistent feature of morality—its predominant ideality of foretaste—is unaccountable on the hypothesis that whatever fails to bear on survival must sooner or later be eliminated. 'By-product' forsooth. An attempt, not even specious, to gloss over a negation. You pretend to rationalise life, nay the cosmic process. And

behold the plain facts about morality contradict that boast of yours: 'Grant us the variations, and we will explain their subsequent history.' 'Science' you call it. It is good science to give yourself up wholeheartedly to a working hypothesis to see how far it will take you. But it is bad science, and bad manners to boot, having planted yourself down upon what you are pleased to call 'first principles,' to seek thence to shout all rival methods down, as if it were *a priori* demonstrable that there must be one path, and one path only, to the top of the mountain. 'By-product' indeed. To credit an inscrutable chance, or, if you will, an Unknowable God, with whatever exceptions your so-called 'laws' are forced to tolerate is an artifice worthy of the 'age of miracles'; and Hume, as you are wont to assure us, has shown that miracles are nonsense."

§ 35. So much, then, for the slur of irrationality which evolutionary utilitarianism would cast upon the theory that those ideals of the moral consciousness which seem the highest *are* the highest for us as moral beings. 'He that is without sin,' we are tempted to say, 'let him first cast a stone.' And, as for the allegation that intuitionism tends to divorce foretaste from forecast, the reply is obvious, There may be a bad kind of intuitionism; but that is not the kind we are now defending. Foretaste and forecast, according to the view we are concerned to uphold, must severally and alike be allotted their natural and proper place in one system of normative Ethics; only the place of foretaste is naturally and properly the higher.

Let us put the matter in a slightly different way. Let us, in order as far as possible to satisfy the rationalist, substitute for foretaste, with its suggestion of something alien to thought, namely feeling, its logical counterpart and equivalent, the concept of a self-justifying moral end or norm. Our contention may now be restated thus. Ethics as Ethics is restricted to the normative form. Its supreme principle of explanation must be an 'ought'—or, if you will, that a certain 'ought' is, and that it is, and can be, for us nothing else but an 'ought.' "Ethics, then," you

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say, "finally bases itself upon an appeal to authority." Yes, but not in your sense of 'authority.' The authority in question is not external to the moral subject. It is just his personal self—or rather that part of himself which appears supreme in a moral context, and in no context of experience appears anything but supreme for all the purposes of morality.

"But we are speaking of different things," perhaps you urge. "You are describing Ethics the art. I, as a rational utilitarian, am seeking to establish Ethics as a science." The answer is that normative Ethics is at once art *and* science. As an art which tries to produce morality it posits the general object of moral conviction, 'right for right's sake,' as the end to which its precepts must finally conduce. As a science which tries to explain morality it refers everything back to this same object conceived as ultimate self-explaining matter of fact. Thus the conformity of the practical and the rational sides of the moral life is from first to last secured, Both stand or fall together. Present worth and ideal worth, Validity as felt and actively sought after and Validity as contemplated by reflection, coincide at the apex of a system which finds its architectonic principle in the intuition of moral goodness as good, and as good for no other reason than that it is itself.

§ 36. "But," says the critic of Validity, by this time (let us hope) driven to his last ditch, "Ethics after all has its limits. It is not life. Much less is it nature. Suppose I grant you that Ethics as Ethics is essentially normative. Is not normativeness as such, however, *ex analogia hominis magis quam universi*? A certain form may be helpful, or even practically indispensable, when you are 'constructing' out of a certain kind of appearance. But what of the kinds of appearance in relation to which it does not help? And, above all, what of Reality? Though the microcosm take itself ever so seriously, is it quite prepared to absorb, or transcend, the macrocosm?"

Well, as to life, regarded as more or less self-organised

and self-organisable experience, there is surely no repudiation of the normativeness of Ethics to be feared from this quarter. Taken at its widest, life (in this sense) is teleological; and the theory which seeks to import method into the work of self-organisation cannot but shape itself accordingly. As consciously experiencing, that is, experimenting, beings we take the validity of life for granted. Life for us may be sweet or stern; but, if we 'will to live,' we are committed to the postulate that, despite all drawbacks, life on the whole is something good and sufficient 'in itself.' Now, unless the moral life as such is to count amongst life's drawbacks—a view we are wont to contradict by shutting up the persons who hold it in prison or the asylum—it must partake in the teleological character of the more comprehensive system. And, as a matter of fact, the place assigned to morals in such a system by the common opinion is very high. Indeed, we have already had occasion to protest against a prevalent notion which would actually lead to the identification of Ethics with the general science and art of conscious living, or at all events with that group of allied normative disciplines which together set before themselves the ideal of 'the higher life.' In which ideal the very aspiration of natural science towards 'truth for truth's sake' constitutes an integral element. If the 'man of science' is not aware of the fundamental normativeness of his intellectual interest, and hence of the object thereto corresponding, it must simply be that in regard to the higher logic he is as Mons. Jourdain was in regard to prose, and 'escapes his own notice' as a 'constructor' of experience.

As to 'Nature' and the universe, there would seem to be *prima facie* reason for taking a teleological view of the aggregate of 'mental' and 'material' appearances, and to be *prima facie* reason against so doing. As empiricists we do not pretend to the possession of any *a priori* clue. We abstract from amongst the manifold appearances one kind of appearance that for us is, because it seems, supremely worthy of our interest and

attention; and we boldly say—'that is *the* truth.' The object of the view we elect to hold is ideal rather than real because it transcends the me-now—because it has yet to be fully realised in actual experience, *our* experience. If, then, at our own risk we accept the responsibility of believing that this is both for us and in itself predominantly a universe in which spirit is realising itself, and realising itself in part through us, that is, by means of, and in some sense conditionally on, our voluntary co-operation, teleology is for us the last word in Metaphysics no less than in Ethics. Or if not, not. Meanwhile, as professed experimentalists, let us at any rate be practical, even to the extent of theorising to some ultimately practical purpose. If Ethics naturally takes shape round a notion of ideal moral goodness as bearing the signs of realisability upon its face; if Ethics, Logic, Art, Religion, so far as they are 'organised interests' capable of standing by themselves, display each a similar fundamental character of normativeness; and if the normativeness of one and all is identical in so far as it insists on the pursuit of the seeming Highest 'for its own pure sake'; then, at all events our teleological, anthropomorphic, personal, rendering of the universe is likely to react on all these interests with advantage—to contribute something of its own towards a general heightening and deepening. And what is left outside? A few stubborn animal passions, a dim sense of fatal arbitrary drivenness. And are these poor fossils and wrecks of time to serve, to the exclusion of maturer forms of experience, as determinants of the human reason and will? Shall they—'must' they—dictate to us a philosophy of life and nature, whereof the bare theoretic contemplation renders our whole disposition towards practice less strenuous, less intense, less susceptible to the hint of immense possibilities in us and about us? "But no," you say. "The effect of materialism on practice is nothing of the kind. It fires, it exalts abidingly."—Then we two are made differently. Let us go our several ways in peace. Perhaps after all, as Uncle

Toby said to the fly, 'there is room in the world alike for me and thee.'

VII. Final Suggestions in Favour of a Combined Use of the Two Standpoints in Empirical Ethics

§ 37. "And what of synthesis?"—says the weary reader. "At the outset you looked forward to a relative unification of the two rival principles of ethical explanation. Nor have you shown, or indeed tried to show, that mere Validity can suffice us as a standpoint any more than mere Origin. Besides, the study of origins is an established industry; and established industries die hard. Others ere now have made it pretty hot for naturalism and evolutionism. But, like Brer Terrapin in the prairie fire, they display a wonderful ability to 'sit and take it.' Can you not manage, then, to allot them a corner of their own in your ethical laboratory? Is there no specific function, even though it be a subordinate one, for them to fulfil?"

Well frankly, as regards naturalism, there can be, from our point of view, no parleying whatever with it. As a philosophy it is contemptible. As a mood it is cheerless and paralysing. And in any case it is always, in pretension at least, a metaphysic, and therefore at once something more and something less than a method of empirical Ethics.

But, though naturalism as a philosophy cannot by rights yield us an ethical standpoint, as a mood it can to some extent do this, the standpoint it favours being that of a narrow and sordid opportunism. Such an opportunism puts the objective condition 'this is what I can do' *before* the subjective condition 'this is what I ought to do.' Nay, its tendency is to neglect the latter altogether as causally inoperative, as mere 'echo.' Thus suppose it to appear expedient on grounds of hygiene that extra-nuptial relations between the sexes should be permitted in times when early marriage is discouraged by custom, or when

in a monogamous society one sex considerably outnumbers the other. Opportunism would pay no heed to objections founded on simple regard for the principle of purity. It assumes that the normal conscience will sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, 'come round.' Or suppose that political economy seem to recommend the suppression of certain *bouches inutiles*, say the quiet putting away of the mentally afflicted or the incurably diseased. Opportunism would be for carrying out the change in the teeth of all 'sentimental' insistence on the value of the individual human life as such. According to this theory, or rather mood—for the real strength of naturalism depends, not on its logic, but on the success of its appeal to the imagination of the unimaginative—the subjective 'necessity' of moral principles is little else than a sham. And what is true of them—so it is urged—is equally true of moral principle in general. Exaggeration enters into the very marrow of the moral sense. By asking of us what otherwise—that is by 'reason' and 'experience'—we might know to be extravagant and impossible, it seeks to cheat us into a more strenuous performance of our tasks. But 'noble lies' are for the sightbound self-hypnotising masses. The rod of enlightened authority and empire is a moral scepticism tempered by statistics.

Well, there is no refuting a mood. We can but give it the cold shoulder. Meanwhile, so far as it pretends to base itself on 'reason' and 'experience,' these, if the foregoing argument is to be trusted, bear witness to precisely the opposite effect.

§ 38. With evolutionism however, it is quite otherwise. Useful work can be found for it to do. If it eschew metaphysics, and attend to its proper business, the historical description and explanation of vital function, it is a weapon in the hands of the moral philosopher only second in importance to the commission which bids him use that weapon rightly.

For ultimately, indeed, that is, when rationalised to its utmost, Ethics, we have decided, must be normative. It must put Validity before Origin, foretaste before forecast.

A general standard of evaluation is given by the moral consciousness in something which ethical thought can but inadequately designate as spirituality of personal motive in regard to social conduct. This may to some extent be susceptible of interpretation from a higher 'level.' The sympathetic metaphysician may discern therein an 'aspect'—a specific rendering—of the ideal of spiritual wholeness, of personal self-realisation, or what not. *Ethically*, however, it is just what it is to the moral intuition. It is a criterion of relative excellence which the good man feelingly—or, in a broad, but quite legitimate, sense of the word 'knowledge,' knowingly—has and can use. Given two or more possible courses of social conduct involving principles that appear qualitatively different, he can choose with certainty—*moral* certainty—between them, once he has accepted it as the 'maxim of his will': *Attend to the spiritualities, and the temporalities may be trusted to look after themselves.*

Alternative courses of seemingly possible social conduct must, however, be given. Our ethical imperatives must always be relative to certain preferables. How, then, are such alternatives given? By forecast.

Forecast is the anticipation of a certain sort of consequence. Foretaste as *fore*taste likewise anticipates consequences in a sense. But the latter are—that is, are apprehended as—necessary and assured consequences. They are consequences in that they have yet to be willed out from ideality into reality. But such a change, viewed from the present standpoint of the agent, can affect but the degree, and not the kind, of the experience they embody. Whether thought of as ideal, or as realised, they are good for the moral subject about to act with one and the same quality of goodness. Forecast, on the other hand, deals with what for the agent must always appear as contingent and debatable consequences—with this or that means as opposed to the end. It has to guarantee though always doubtfully yet as best it can the actual possibility of the ethically preferable course of conduct, before mere wish can ripen into resolve. The

good man must always seek to do that which, in the broadest sense of the phrase, is 'best under the circumstances.' An Ethics that is empirically normative cannot but regard this as the only intelligible 'best.' The general subjective necessity 'this is what I ought to do,' though prior in the logic of Ethics, that is, prior for us as beings who have to build on the 'fact' of our moral freedom, can have neither meaning nor function apart from the general objective ratification 'this is what I can do.' To forecast which latter condition as rightly as may be possible constitutes an important branch of the work of such an evolutionism as concerns itself with the comparative history of man's attempts to adapt himself to his environment.

§ 39. Meanwhile the present essay does not profess to be a methodology of Ethics, but at most to serve in some sort as an introduction thereto. It will suffice, therefore, if we indicate quite broadly how Validity and Origin, intuitionism and evolutionism, as distinct principles and methods operating in conjunction, are to import logical system into Ethics in the highest attainable degree.

This, then, at least is plain—that Ethics cannot be organised on the model of a despot's court, the 'ought' sitting enthroned upon a dais, whilst below and respectfully remote stands this and that attendant 'can.' An Ethics that bases itself on experience—as we understand experience—cannot afford to show the slightest sympathy with the dualistic view that disjoins the *a priori* from the *a posteriori*. On the contrary, it must seek to explain and justify the experience of the normal moral subject, who *does* somehow manage to combine the affirmation of an architectonic end with a due consideration for practicable ways and means. Thus the general body of ethical doctrine must present as free and full as possible a commingling of what we have for the sake of clearness distinguished as the 'subjective' and 'objective' elements or determinants. If 'ought' and 'can' are not to be made to join hands and work together for a common object there is an end of Ethics. But Ethics *is*, and will not be

ended, so long as there are thinkers who are content to try to make the best of what they have got, and to observe experience from within instead of raising futile questions as to what it would look like could one get outside.

Now the strength of a science is rightly held to reside in its *axiomata media*. And so we may say that it is by its power of firmly establishing its secondary principles that the soundness of ethical method is to be tried and tested. How, then, are 'ought' and 'can'—the subjective and objective factors — to co-operate to produce such secondary principles? How, for instance, is a *catalogue raisonné* of particular virtues to be drawn up that shall without inconsistency present them as embodiments of the end and yet likewise as generalised possibilities of conduct?

By a compromise, we answer—a compromise based on a clear recognition of their mutual relativeness and dependency; though even so the best of the bargain, in the shape of an appreciable balance of authoritativeness, cannot but fall to 'ought' as against 'can'—to Validity as against Origin. Each left to itself would initiate and pursue a method of its own, Validity an analytic, deductive, and Origin a comparative, inductive, method. But each, unsupported and uncontrolled by the other, is bound, as it seems at least to the empiricist, to stultify itself by onesidedness and extravagance, Validity by engendering mere quixotism, and Origin mere opportunism. Hence, though each may occupy its own sanctum in the ethical laboratory, employing groups of specialists who have no time to interest themselves in the details of one another's work, the true and scientific account of the laws and principles of Ethics must always take the form of a joint report subscribed to by the heads of both departments. Nay, it were obviously best that the minutest specialist on either side, in order to avoid becoming the slave—the 'ideopath,' so to speak—of his chosen method, should be generally acquainted with the relations of his working assumptions to those of the other branch, that is, with

the methodology of Ethics as a whole, and thus be able in a broad way to make the 'professional equation' as he goes.

Analytic Ethics prevails over Comparative Ethics simply by reason of its greater affirmativeness both as art and science. And its right to be the more affirmative is grounded on the 'fact' that for the actual moral subject of to-day, both when he is acting, and when in his theoretical mood he asks himself, 'Is this really and truly so for me as a typical moral subject trying to understand himself and his position,' the nature of moral principle is more closely bound up with the subjective, 'intersubjective,' if you will, since typical, but still subjective, than with the objective, element therein contained. In other words, the 'laws' of Ethics ultimately are, in their theoretical no less than in their practical aspect, authoritative pronouncements rather than observed uniformities. Doubtless the conditions which determine the nature of morality as a product are phenomenally of two kinds. There are determinations from within morality itself, and there are determinations from without. But the one kind which consists in the evaluatory selections of a will moved by the intuition of morality as worth realising in itself and for itself (that is, apart from any consequence save itself) appears to Empirical Psychology, in its introspective and historical capacities taken together, to cause more, and to explain more, than the other kind, which is composed of whatever influences control and limit the action of such a will without apparently sharing in its inner guiding purpose. These latter conditions that are ethically 'objective' (in the sense of 'external'—not, of course, in the metaphysical sense of 'determinate,' which may or may not be an adequate expression for Nature as a whole) have doubtless to be reckoned with. The constructive affirmations of any intuitionism are always open to criticism on the score of objective impracticability, when such impracticability is the verdict of a strong induction. But the impracticabilities of morals are on the whole internal rather than physical or physiological. It is chiefly

because we do not will, and do not will to will, the seeming Highest strongly enough, not because we otherwise cannot, that—as a matter of 'fact'—our characters and conduct are found morally wanting. Broadly speaking in regard to the very general policies of action represented by the particular virtues, we can, and mostly do, realise them all in *some* degree. Ethically, however, the important question we have to ask ourselves is: How can we do so in the *highest* degree—that is, so as to give each virtue that place in the system of our life which its relative value warrants? Thus I can practice nationalism and I can practice humanitarianism. Probably the 'best under the circumstances' permits of both. But which for the general purposes of my moral self-realisation is to count for more? When all has been said on both sides, it is to Validity rather than to Origin —to intuitionism rather than to evolutionary utilitarianism —that the good man will go for the 'rational' solution.

§ 40. We have sought to keep true to empiricism. If our conclusions favour a reflective and critical intuitionism, at least they are conclusions that profess to be founded on simple matter of 'fact.' The ground on which we take our stand is wholly psychological. We allege no more than a psychological, and hence phenomenological, 'ought.' The *real* 'ought' is for your Will. *We* (at a certain personal risk of our own—for example, the risk of being thought illogical or foolish) have selected a certain view of moral experience because it seems to be for man (as we seem to know him both in ourselves and otherwise) supremely worthy of attention at the 'level' of Ethics. *You* must attend to it at your own *personal* risk. If, by attending to it rather than to anything else *in pari materia*, you reach a Better (which is not necessarily a physical or biological Better, for all that it turns out to be not incompatible with physical and biological conditions!), then what the pair of us believe is true—true, at any rate, until something even truer emerges from the 'visible darkness' that is both in us and about us.

VI

ART AND PERSONALITY[1]

By Henry Sturt

I. Scope and Method

1. Art is a characteristic function of personality.
2. Artistic consciousness should be studied in its creative rather than its receptive form,
3. and in artists that are familiar rather than those that are remote.

II. The Solidarity of the Higher Life

4. An artist's most important quality is enthusiasm,
5. which must be directed upon objects external to himself;
6. these being men, or things with human qualities.
7. The personal element is traceable even in (*a*) architecture,
8. (*b*) nature-painting,
9. and (*c*) music.
10. Though art implies emotion, it is not to be defined as the expression of emotion, either self-regarding,
11. or reflective.
12. Though art has to do with pleasure, it is not to be defined as a form of pleasure-seeking, either coarse or refined.
13. Art is not self-reduplication, though it is self-expression.
14. Unselfish appreciation of persons is the mainspring of knowledge and morality also, though both are specifically distinct from art;
15. it unifies our higher life both on its subjective and its objective side; and is a strong vital experience.

III. The Separateness of Art

16. Art is separate from morality and knowledge formally
17. and materially, (*a*) as a subjective experience,
18. (*b*) in regard to the objects for which it is felt, which are persons.
19. The separateness of art is obscured by the transference of artistic terms and forms to what is outside art.
20. Knowledge and morality are in like manner separate.
21. It is not a vicious circle to define art as the appreciation of art in others.
22. The separateness of our higher interests may be transcended.

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[1] An abridgement of an earlier draft of this essay is printed in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, N.S. vol. i.

IV. Artistic Valuation

23. The questions connected with artistic valuation are (*a*) what is valued, (*b*) by whom, (*c*) for whom, (*d*) on what ground, (*e*) with what authority.
24. (*a*) What is valued is the work as manifesting consciousness, which must be of the artistic kind.
25. (*b*) It is the artist, primarily, who values; secondarily, the critic.
26. (*c*) It is the artist, primarily, for whom the work has value; but it is essential that he should wish others to enjoy it.
27. (*d*) The ground of the valuation is an immediate personal experience.
28. This is intuitionism, but the intuition it affirms (α) is not merely intellectual, (β) is connected with all the rest of our personal and social life, (γ) is flexible;
29. and its method is empirical, though mere empiricism can never do justice to the personal affirmation in artistic judgments.
30. (*e*) Not all erroneous artistic valuations have a definite principle to oppose to us;
31. but the need of a superhuman authority to back the true valuation is felt (α) in combating decadents who deny the value of life,
32. (β) in fighting for artistic progress.
33. I agree with popular opinion in affirming the right of private judgment;
34. disagree in denying the accessibility of an objective criterion.

I. Scope and Method

§ 1. Though English literature is rich in writings on art —Ruskin alone would redeem us from poverty—we have not much that treats of it in a purely speculative way. Ruskin's glowing pages are full of artistic truths, truths of wide sweep and truths of finest detail; but he never stood away and viewed the subject as a whole from a detached position. He gives us plenty of philosophic material, but no philosophy of art.

The object of the present essay is to study artistic experience philosophically; above all, to contribute to the knowledge of personality by considering in very general terms what it is and does in the sphere of art. Such an investigation is in any case worth making, and especially so if we believe that art is not only a function, but a characteristic function, of personality; that is, a function parallel in its nature to the functions we call morality and knowledge. I think that careful study would convince us that art is not a by-path or anomalous province; but that the human spirit exhibits the unity of its nature throughout its experiences, artistic, moral, and epistemonic.

Granted this, the study of art must throw great light upon the other functions. Particularly in regard to ethics it is hardly too much to say that any one who is beset by false notions about art will never interpret moral experience truly.

This is how, in the first instance, I would justify my title "Art and Personality." The results of the argument will justify it further. We shall see, firstly, that the supreme artistic interest, the mainspring of artistic conation, is an affectionate admiration for human persons; secondly that art illustrates both the solidarity and the separateness of the main elements of our personal life; thirdly, that artistic value is, for us, entirely an affirmation of personal experience. Lastly, the title of the essay is meant to indicate the limitations of its scope, which neglects the social and historical sides of art. Another essay on "Art and Society" might well be written without overlapping the present one. And a glance of the chapter-headings of Dr. Hirn's excellent *Origins of Art* will show how wide a field of history I leave untouched. In art-philosophy, as in ethics, we can learn much by studying individuals as we meet them in daily life, abstracting temporarily from their historical antecedents and social medium.

§ 2. Of the persons who may distinctively be termed artistic there are two classes, artists and connoisseurs. Which of the two shall we elect to study as the type of artistic experience? I think undoubtedly the former. Here, at least, I have the support of Dr. Bosanquet, who argues that in such theorising we should take the attitude of "the mind of the maker."[1] Were we discussing science instead of art there would hardly be need of arguments to establish this point. What should we think of the theorist who took as his type of the scientific mind, not the explorer and creator, but the docile student; or quoted as the typical philosopher, not Aristotle, but Simplicius? In morals the point becomes so obvious that it needs an effort to realise the force of the parallel.

[1] "On the Nature of Æsthetic Emotion," in *Mind* for April, 1894, p. 155.

There the connoisseur is one who says "video meliora proboque"; but such is not the man on whom we base our theory of virtue.

We get the same result from introspection. That definite and well-known experience which we call artistic comes to us more fully in making a work of our own than in contemplating another man's. It would be strange were the case otherwise. Through all the range of our life our feelings are keenest when we are actualising them. Aristotle was right with his *ἐνεργείᾳ ἔσμεν*—"it is in the exercise of our faculties that our existence lies." Keenly as we may feel in looking passively at a sunset, keenly as we may enjoy the sunset in the "Fighting Téméraire," we might be sure that if we painted the sunset we should have a feeling of the distinctively artistic kind far more rich and keen.

Yet, in ordinary discussions, the standpoint assumed is almost always that of the receptive side; and this accounts for nine-tenths of the mistakes in art-philosophy. One reason for assuming this standpoint is obvious. Connoisseurs are many and artists are few, and there is always a temptation to confuse the "average" with the "typical." But there is perhaps a more philosophical reason which we shall appreciate if we consider how the experience of the looker-on compares with that of the artist. The former is, so to speak, a creator at second-hand. Turner, in painting the Téméraire, had the creative experience at first-hand; the intelligent admirer, on the suggestion of the picture, goes through part of what the painter felt. But, though the spectator's feeling is feebler, it is purer. He is not troubled, like the artist, by difficulties of technique. The popular preference for the spectator's standpoint is instructive, if it shows us that, to get to the essentials of art, we must think away the merely technical element in the artist's experience.

The mention of technique leads on to a further definition of my standpoint. It will have been noticed that I have spoken more of the artist's mind than of the work which he produces. It is mental facts that will

mainly be kept in view in the following pages. The "art" which I propose to study in connection with personality is the direct expression of the consciousness of the artist.

§ 3. Of course it is in his works principally that the artist's consciousness is revealed. But the observer must use all helps to get at the underlying consciousness. He must attend to what artists say about their work, and to what they like or dislike in others. And thus, for his investigations, no artists are so useful as those of whom he can get personal knowledge. If he does not understand the artists of his own day, the painters who paint familiar beauties, the poets who treat the current themes of vital interest, the musicians who interpret the emotions of contemporary society, we shall not get much help from artists of a different age and clime.

Neglect of these considerations accounts largely for the unreality of so many cultured discussions on art. An anecdote will illustrate my meaning. Not long ago I heard a distinguished professor, who has never done anything manual in his life, begin an art discussion with the words "When I look at a Greek statue——." This little phrase approves by implication many errors that we should shun. "I look" implies the receptive attitude; that point has been dealt with. "Greek" is our present concern. How can an Englishman expect to reach the truth about art by beginning with the artistic consciousness of Greeks twenty-five centuries away? "Statue" is hardly less mistaken. Statuary is an art-form which does not appeal strongly to our age and country. So long as our climate and habits remain what they are, it will never emerge from its secondary position. The Greeks, on the other hand, were always practising naked in the palæstra. Their work shows that they cared as much for the figure as the face. But to Englishmen the face is nearly everything, except to the few who have studied from the nude, which my professor had certainly never done. So, instead of his conventional classicality, the professor should have said: "When an English sculptor

models a face." Even then he was wrong in not beginning with the art he practised, literature.

II. The Solidarity of the Higher Life

§ 4. Of all the qualities that go to make a true artist, the most important is enthusiasm. The word itself has had a chequered history. We all know of the early Victorian archbishop who addressed a band of outgoing missionaries with the words, "Above all, avoid enthusiasm." He was doubtless using the word in its older sense of that neurotic exaltation, so notorious in later days among American revivalists,[1] which is often the dangerous enemy of reason and morality. But the enthusiasm I mean is just that rational fervour which is essential to the most perfect forms of intellectual and moral experience.

The repressing and ignoring of enthusiasm was the worst feature of the eighteenth century. Its recognition is the most hopeful sign for the century just begun. "Enthusiastic" is now almost a customary epithet for artists, like "gallant" for soldiers. Even the ordinary Britisher knows that without enthusiasm, or unselfish devotion to art for its own beauty, no artist, however skilful, can be noble; and that with it the least skilful can never be contemptible. The man of skill and no devotion he despises as a manufacturer.

Using, as I do, enthusiasm in quite a common sense, I have no fear that it will be seriously misunderstood. But it is worth while to make its meaning plainer by comparing it with some kindred terms. 'Admiration' and 'unselfish appreciation' do not express the active *working* fervour of the enthusiast. Admiration, moreover, is too much limited to our feeling for men; it would hardly express our feeling for a cause. 'Devotion' is nearly synonymous; but it has religious or, at least, exalted associations which are not relevant to our

[1] Cf. B. Sidis, *Psychology of Suggestion*, chap. xxxiii., entitled "American Mental Epidemics."

present meaning. But all these terms share with enthusiasm the connotation of a self-forgetful absorption in a pursuit which is valued, not because it brings pleasure or profit or renown, but because it is intrinsically precious and noble.

The quality of enthusiasm belongs not to art only, but also to the other activities, knowledge and morality, which go with art to make up our higher life. The sphere of the higher life might in fact be described as that in which enthusiasm is possible. A cool propriety, a cool curiosity never sufficed to make a saint or scientific genius. Art, knowledge, and morality have each of them intrinsic value, a value which, as we shall see in the last section of this essay, is vouched for, primarily, by the affirmation of the personal self. Enthusiasm is the affirmation of intrinsic values on its passionate side.

§ 5. We have so far, by an unreal though necessary abstraction, considered enthusiasm subjectively, or as an affection of the acting self. None the less, it is essential to enthusiasm that it should be directed upon an object outside the acting self. It is possible, indeed frequent, for a man to view himself with pride, but not with enthusiasm. In morals a man cannot turn from thinking admiringly of another's virtue to thinking of his own with the same admiration. The transition from the not-self to the self involves an essential change of feeling. So it is with the artistic form of enthusiasm. Art is the effort to represent objects which the artist thinks beautiful, or, at least, deserving of sympathetic interest. But they must be objects which are not merely part of the agent's own self. This would probably be admitted as a rule, but there are cases on the boundary which might cause difficulty. In literature there is the case of autobiography. Can a man relate his own adventures and delineate his own character with the same artistic spirit that he can devote to another man's? I think not. An autobiography may be excellent as a historical record or as a human document, like Benvenuto Cellini's; but it is a mistake for the writer to try to make it a work of art, except in

the subordinate sense of taking pains with the arrangement and style. Compare Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon* with a book which perhaps suggested to him the idea of a romance of scoundrelism, Casanova's Memoirs. One is art, the other egoism.

In painting there is the similar case of the artist who paints his own portrait. Here an objective attitude is less difficult because the matter represented is not so central to the acting self. It is possible for a man to be interested in his physical appearance, not because it is his, but because it is human. Still, there are many dangers in self-portraiture. In Florence there is a famous gallery reserved for portraits of artists by their own hands; and the most successful are those in which the artists have looked at their own faces in a detached impersonal way as interesting human lineaments, not unsuggestive of human peculiarities and failings.

§ 6. To learn what are the objects of artistic interest we must go to the arts; and, to begin with, not to the most rudimentary, but to the most perfect of them. This, men have agreed, is poetry. For there is most in it on the whole, and to excel requires the highest powers. We have only to take down from our shelves any of the great poets, from Homer to Tennyson, to assure ourselves that their supreme interest is Man. Turn over their pages and you will find that human strength and beauty, love and hope, pain and sorrow, effort and adventure, art and skill are the substance of their song. In the preface to *Sordello* Browning says, "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul; little else is worth study." On the whole, that is true.

A sympathetic interest in men is the mainspring even of that rare and difficult form, the poetry of pessimism. Pure pessimism, which is the same as pure misanthropy, is seldom met with and is artistically worthless. The only sort that is tolerable gives the impression that man is a creature possessing many noble qualities, but basely tormented by cruel circumstance.

So with the satirist. Juvenal and Swift would be

execrable if we did not feel that their fury against men is really a fury that men are not better. It is a cry for reform cloked as a curse.

Nature, animate and inanimate, claims the poet's interest in a less degree. In many cases, he cares for it only as a background to human life. Where Nature is an object of independent interest it is viewed, as it were, *sub specie humanitatis*. Even in the nature that is farthest from us, the poet sees human powers and attributes; grace in flowers, majesty in mountains, purity in air and sky.

§ 7. There are some branches of art in which my thesis that artistic interest is interest in psychic life, human or quasi-human, may be sustained with comparative ease. These are poetry, portrait-painting, and portrait-sculpture. They may therefore be left aside, and we will turn to other cases where, for various reasons, the principle is less obvious. Such a case is architecture, the interest of which I will try to analyse in detail. It is a case where we are forced to take the spectator's standpoint rather than the artist's. For there is usually a good deal more artistic interest in a noble building than its builder put there.

A considerable piece of architecture, one of our cathedrals for example, stands midway between the things of artistic value that are purely natural and those which, like a painting, are purely artificial. We never forget that human hands built it; and yet from its huge bulk, its assimilation by weathering to the visible quality of rock and cliff, and the dependence of its structural permanency on the crude natural strength and weight of stone and timber, it takes a place in our thought among the main features of its landscape. Thus its interest has many sides, which it is worth while to distinguish for the sake of showing how they are related to humanity.

First, there is the interest of human association. English people are worshipping in the building; great and good men of the past have served and worshipped there.

Secondly, there is the interest of workmanship. The architect and sculptor have put their thought into its planning and decoration. These two interests are directly personal.

Thirdly, there is the interest of nationality. The building informs us not only of the craftsman's consciousness, but of the nation's. The religious and secular ideals of medieval England, its hopes and fears, its view of Nature and of Man, its outlook upon the time and its conceptions of a future life were expressed more adequately in churches than in any other form.

Fourthly, there is the interest of organic character. Let us consider what we mean by that hard-worked philosophic term "organism." In part we only mean that the thing denoted has life, whatever the qualities of life may be. This meaning, obviously, is not in question here. But also we mean that the thing possesses a definite meaning and purpose which pervades the parts, so that they are instrumental or "organic" to it. The more thorough the pervasion of the meaning, and the more elaborately the parts are shaped to express it, the more organic the organism. To us the human body, the instrument of personal life, is the supreme organism, because the meaning which it subserves is to us supreme. And thus we tend to view as quasi-personal every totality which subserves meaning in a way analogous to the human body. So it is with the cathedral; and with every building that has a worthy meaning. Every material structure which is an object of our unselfish interest, we tend to regard as possessing an almost human individuality. That is why the sailor speaks of his ship as "she." That also is why we often resent alterations in a favourite building which a stranger would recognise as improvements.

Fifthly, there is the interest of the vitality of the parts. To a sympathetic vision the stones and beams of the cathedral are severally instinct with life. The strong straight pillars sustain the upper fabric with an air of well-girt purpose; the arches spring; the timbers knit

the roof; the buttresses thrust sturdily against the pressure of the roof; the spire soars into the sky. The eye instinctively interprets these dead mechanic things in terms of living power; and those forms are grateful to it which assist its instinctive interpretation.[1]

The foregoing enumeration of aspects may not be exhaustive. That is immaterial. Distinction of the aspects of the artistic interest is less important than apprehension of its unifying principle, which is interest in a vital whole. The fourth and fifth aspects, which imply each other, are the fundamental ones. The two first are but enhancements. They cannot be mechanically added to the core of interest, but must belong organically. Take the first—association. The fact that Napoleon had worshipped, or professed to worship, in a building could lend it but an adventitious interest. To enhance its artistic value, we should need the memory of some God-fearing warrior, like Cromwell.

§ 8. I have now to establish my position in regard to nature-painting, including under that term the painting of animals, still-life, and landscape. In regard to the first of these, the matter needs little argument. It is easy to see that what we value in the representation of animals are excellences akin to human. The danger is that we fall into the opposite error and suppose that we care for animals, not as beasts, but as men in beasts' clothing. Landseer illustrates both the better and the worse possibilities of the animal-painter. Sometimes his dogs are mere human caricatures. His best picture, the *Shepherd's Chief Mourner*, exemplifies the two conditions of success. It is full of the purest appreciation of dog-nature as such; and it teaches us how to admire in beasts a virtue akin to the highest in man.

Still-life and landscape go very closely together, so that nearly all that applies to the latter applies to the former. As landscape is far the more important, I reserve the main argument for it. There is only one element

[1] Cf. the excellent analysis of the artistic quality of a Doric column by T. Lipps, *Raumästhetik*, chaps. i. and ii.

which is more prominent in still-life. In the minute study of flowers and leaves, for example, we have an overpowering impression of looking into the work of an artificer of the subtlest taste and inexhaustible resource and skill. This is not the wire-drawn fancy of an abstract thinker, but what occurs to the mind of the straightforward sympathetic observer—"even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." An equal impression of subtlety and power is got from the lines and tints of scenery, such as that of mountains. But there the sense of contact with an artificing consciousness is weaker; because, while man with stone and metal can imitate the lily, mountains are beyond him.

Finally, then, of landscape, which has a claim to fuller notice as having only reached maturity in our own time. It is evident that no simple explanation of it will suffice. A taste of ours that was weak in the contemporaries of Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson must be part of our latest gain in subtlety and power.

To put it broadly, the modern taste for landscape-painting is based on sympathy with the life of Nature, the same sympathy which drives many a traveller to roam through strange and lonely places of the earth. Here is a passage from that type of the wandering nature-lover, George Kingsley, which is an example how some men feel about islands and forests. "No landscape seems perfect to my eyes unless they can see therein a bit of the blue water—therefore I love an island. I love the sigh and the sough of the wind in the black pine forests of Germany; I love the swish of the Northern birch-trees in the fresh odorous early morning, when the gale has just gone by, and the wet is sweeping in little glittering showers off their lissom branches; I love the creak and groan and roar of the great oaks in a storm; and I love the lazy whispering murmur of the light green limes in the lazy golden summer afternoon; but, above all the sounds of Nature, I love the voices of the sea, for they speak to me in more varied tones, and I know that they tell me more, though I know not what they tell me,

than the voices of a million sibilant leaves—therefore I love an island."[1] What the landscapist does is to translate this sort of feeling into visual form.

Though this is the foundation of landscape-interest, the influence of association is not small. Both the main interest and this auxiliary have been magnificently set forth by Ruskin. "Among the hours of his life to which the writer looks back with peculiar gratitude, as having been marked by more than ordinary fulness of joy or clearness of teaching, is one passed, now some years ago, near time of sunset, among the broken masses of pine forest which skirt the course of the Ain, above the village of Champagnole, in the Jura. It is a spot which has all the solemnity, with none of the savageness, of the Alps, where there is a sense of a great power beginning to be manifested in the earth, and of a deep and majestic concord in the rise of the long, low lines of piny hills; the first utterance of those mighty mountain symphonies, soon to be more loudly lifted and wildly broken along the battlements of the Alps. But their strength is as yet restrained, and the far-reaching ridges of pastoral mountain succeed each other, like the long and sighing swell which moves over quiet waters from some far-off stormy sea. And there is a deep tenderness pervading that vast monotony. The destructive forces and the stern expression of the central ranges are alike withdrawn. No frost-ploughed, dust-encumbered paths of ancient glacier fret the soft Jura pastures; no splintered heaps of ruin break the fair ranks of her forests; no pale, defiled, or furious rivers rend their rude and changeful ways among her rocks. Patiently, eddy by eddy, the clear green streams wind along their well-known beds; and under the dark quietness of the undisturbed pines, there spring up, year by year, such company of joyful flowers as I know not the like of among all the blessings of the earth. It was springtime, too; and all were coming forth in clusters crowded for very love; there was room enough for all, but they crushed their

[1] *Notes on Sport and Travel*, p. 60.

leaves into all manner of strange shapes only to be nearer each other. There was the wood-anemone, star after star, closing every now and then into nebulæ; and there was the oxalis, troop by troop, like virginal processions of the Mois de Marie, the dark vertical clefts in the limestone choked up with them as with heavy snow, and touched with ivy on the edges—ivy as light and lovely as the vine; and, ever and anon, a blue gush of violets, and cowslip bells in sunny places; and in the more open ground, the vetch and comfrey, and mezereon, and the small sapphire buds of the *Polygala Alpina*, and the wild strawberry, just a blossom or two, all showered amidst the golden softness of deep, warm, amber-coloured moss. I came out presently on the edge of the ravine: the solemn murmur of its waters rose suddenly from beneath, mixed with the singing of the thrushes among the pine boughs; and, on the opposite side of the valley, walled all along as it was by grey cliffs of limestone, there was a hawk sailing slowly off their brow, touching them nearly with his wings, and with the shadows of the pines flickering upon his plumage from above; but with a fall of a hundred fathoms under his breast, and the curling pools of the green river gliding and glittering dizzily beneath him, their foam globes moving with him as he flew. It would be difficult to conceive a scene less dependent upon any other interest than that of its own secluded and serious beauty; but the writer well remembers the sudden blankness and chill which were cast upon it when he endeavoured, in order more strictly to arrive at the sources of its impressiveness, to imagine it, for a moment, a scene in some aboriginal forest of the New Continent. The flowers in an instant lost their light; the river its music;[1] the hills became oppressively desolate; a heaviness in the boughs of the darkened forest showed how much of their former power had been dependent upon a life which was not theirs, how much of the glory of the imperishable, or continually renewed, creation is reflected from things

[1] Yet not *all* their light, nor *all* its music, as Ruskin admits in a note.

more precious in their memories than it, in its renewing. Those ever-springing flowers, and ever-flowing streams had been dyed by the deep colours of human endurance, valour, and virtue; and the crests of the sable hills that rose against the evening sky received a deeper worship, because their far shadows fell eastward over the iron wall of Joux, and the four-square keep of Granson."[1]

After George Kingsley and Ruskin it is perhaps superfluous to labour my main point further. I will take these extracts as proving that the nature-lover does not think of nature as merely material, but loves it as possessing a quasi-personal life.

§ 9. Music could hardly be discussed adequately till after the consideration of the rival theory that art is the expression of emotion, a theory which finds its strongest illustrations in music. But the general application of my view in regard to music may be indicated now.

We have in music to make a distinction which has not been necessary in the other arts, that between interpretation and composition. Each musical performance is, like an actor's interpretation of his part, a sort of re-creation by the performer. It is here that most of the enthusiasm of music is found, and here that it is most directly intelligible. For to make a great musical work live again in sound with all its wealth of human feeling and ingenuity, is a task to stimulate interest to the highest. But what we are mainly concerned with, according to our standpoint, is the mind of the composer, and we must determine in what sense the composer can be said to be moved by interest in personal life.

According to general agreement, music is the most spontaneous of the arts. A tune springs up within the composer's mind, he cannot tell why or how. He cannot usually say more than that it "comes to him." But if music remained on this level of mere spontaneous expression, we should never get anything more significant artistically than thoughtless whistling. There must be added serious effort and application. Part of the effort

[1] *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, p. 162.

may be due to any of the lower motives which induce men to exert themselves. But part of it, I venture to say, comes from enthusiasm for that beautiful world of sound which is man's mysterious and delightful heritage; and a still greater part from interest in the varieties of emotional thought which music is fitted to convey.

How the emotional thought in good music may be interpreted, is to be learnt from the analyses which are common in musical literature. Good examples are Spitta's analyses of the *Wohltemperiertes Clavier* in his Life of Bach, and Wagner's appreciations of Beethoven in his *Art-Work of the Future*. By these eminent writers the sentiment of Bach's and Beethoven's music is interpreted in a great, almost heroic, way. But I will content myself with a simple illustration. Most amateurs know Heine's cycle of songs called *Dichterliebe*, set to music by Schumann. The first song, "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai," is a beautiful expression of happy love; a later song, "Ich grolle nicht," a magnificent expression of a jilted lover's fury and despair. Now, there is no reason to think that Schumann was actually convulsed by these rapturous or bitter emotions when he was writing the songs, any more than if he had treated the incidents by painting. But there can be no doubt that he was strongly interested in them. Man was to him worthy of deeply sympathetic study, and his emotions, bright or sombre, well worth the utmost effort of the musician to enshrine in melody.

§ 10. The narrow limits of an essay will not permit the review even of the more important of the rival theories of the essential nature of artistic interest. But there are two at least which should be noticed, partly for their intrinsic importance, partly because the discussion of them will throw fresh light upon the position just laid down. The first of these theories, or classes of theory, connects art with emotion; the second with pleasure.

It is true, of course, that art implies emotion; every vital action does so in more or less degree, and art more than most. For, firstly, art is not the main business of

life, but, like play, an indulgence out of our superfluity. And therefore we are not fully fitted to produce or enjoy art save when pleasurable emotion raises the tide of vital feeling above its normal force. Secondly, the object of artistic representation must awaken in us some kind of emotion, bright or sombre. Otherwise it would be one of those neutral uninteresting things which no one cares to put into art. This we may call the present emotional interest of the artistic object. And, thirdly, the object has usually a remembered emotional interest. The poet who writes drinking songs is usually one who has had immediate personal acquaintance with the pleasures of wine. It is generally admitted that a wide practical experience of life is a necessary part of the equipment of the literary artist. But all this is far from justifying what is perhaps the dominant theory of art just now, that art is definable as the expression of emotion.

One form of the theory, a coarse, uncritical form, may be termed the Byronic fallacy. This fallacy assumes that any one who is full of turbid feeling about himself is, so far, qualified to be some sort of artist; by preference, a poet. One could hardly maintain that Byron himself held this view, even at the epoch when he began to write *Childe Harold;* but it seems to have been current in the early Victorian period among a certain class of his admirers. "Demetrius Wiggle, sir, is the slave of passion," says the friend of a Byronesque young man-about-town in one of Thackeray's books. But, in reality, to feel deeply miserable and discontented, to be in a turmoil of love or hate or ambition, is, so far as these feelings are self-regarding mental disturbances, not a help, but a hindrance to poetry.

§ 11. Dr. Bosanquet's emotive theory of art[1] is of course much more refined and philosophic than the foregoing. At first, we must admit, there does not seem to be much difference. He says: "I suggest as the most fundamental and universal feature, from which all the common characteristics of æsthetic emotion may be

[1] "On the Nature of Æsthetic Emotion" already quoted.

deduced, the simple fact that it is expressed." Surely, we must object, this is far too sweeping. At this rate, Achilles expressing emotion by sulking in his tent or dragging Hector by the heels was an artist. And indeed we find presently that the object through which the emotion is expressed is very important; this object must be "a presentation more or less individual." Dr. Bosanquet adopts, as expressing his own view, Aristotle's analysis of tragedy, interpreted by Lessing and Bernays. "There is a form of art called Tragedy which produces pleasure by means of two painful emotions, pity and fear. How this is possible is a problem that answers itself when we consider the conditions of artistic expression or representation. By a typical portrayal of human life in some story that forms an individual whole, the feelings in question are divested of their personal reference, and acquire a content drawn from what is serious and noteworthy in humanity, and thus alone, it seems clearly to be Aristotle's view, can their quintessence be fully uttered and drawn out and find its pleasurable discharge free from morbid elements of mere shock and personal sensibility. The connection of pity and fear, which is the centre of his doctrine, really indicates that fear, for art, is a fear idealised by expression or objective embodiment, while free utterance is not aided but lamed and obstructed by any intrusion of the dumb shock of personal terror. Thus then, and thus alone, can fear be made an æsthetic emotion, a source of artistic enjoyment or the pleasure of tragedy. It is not, and this is a fundamental point, it is not merely that the emotion is 'refined,' in the sense that its bodily resonance is rendered less intense. A modified resonance will attend a modified emotion, but the intensity of feeling is not a question of principle in relation to its æsthetic character. The æsthetic character lies in the dwelling on and drawing out the feeling, in its fullest reference, by help of a definite presentation which accents its *nature*."

My judgment on Dr. Bosanquet's doctrine as a whole is that, starting from a principle which is quite wrong, it

works round to a view which is nearly right; his approximation to truth consisting in his growing recognition of the importance of objective interest. But let me clear up the difference between us by considering a particular tragedy, *Richard II.*, for example. In spite of what he said earlier in his essay, when combating the hedonist theory of art, as to the necessity of assuming the attitude of the "mind of the maker," it is clear that in his account of tragedy he assumes the attitude of the spectator. If then, he seems to say, we met Richard II. in the flesh, discrowned and miserable, we should feel an immediate shock of painful emotion which would not be art. When awakened, however, by the dignified scenic representation of the hapless king these emotions become artistic.

Against this I would urge that as a preliminary we must assume the attitude of the tragic artist; for the feeling of the spectator is only that of the artist at second-hand. Then we shall see, I think, that what Shakespeare was interested in, was not the emotions of pity and fear, but the man Richard II. as delineated by the Chronicle and vivified and ennobled by his own poetic imagination. His artistic effort consisted in the construction of a drama to exhibit the action of the king under pathetic circumstances. The pity and fear of the tragic artist and the spectators are secondary to their interest in the persons of the play. Dr. Bosanquet holds that the object is important because of the emotions; the truth is rather that the emotions are important because of the object.

The argument of those who hold an emotive theory of art is strongest in music. There the current opinion is that the be-all and end-all of the process is the generation of a succession of emotions. This may approximate to the truth as regards the hearer, but not as regards the composer. And how fallacious it is as regards the performer may be known by watching good musicians. Interested they are, but not emotionally upset, either about the content of the music or about their own concerns. I once read an absurd remark that the piano-playing of a

young girl full of feeling is more artistically satisfying than that of a more skilful middle-aged performer. This is the Byronic fallacy again. The playing of young people is generally cold. They are full of feeling, but it is feeling about themselves, the sort that has no immediate value for art. The elder performer is much more likely to play warmly because the years have trained him in sympathy.

In the other arts I am on ground which is plainly much stronger. If we watch a good painter working at a portrait we do not see that he is labouring under strong emotion; we are astonished at his technical mastery and insight into character. The nearer we get to the mere expression of emotion, as in the antics of boys who have been promised a holiday, the further we get from art.

§ 12. Pleasure, like emotion, is obviously connected very closely with art. Art is not a means of self- or race-preservation, at least in its modern form, whatever anthropologists may tell us of its origin. It would therefore not be pursued unless it brought pleasure on the whole. But when this is admitted we are very far from admitting that art is definable as a kind of pleasure-seeking. Such a definition would miss out the characteristic feature of the thing defined. Nor would it be true in many individual cases. For if we interrogated an artist of the higher class on the subject we should probably find that, though he valued his art as infinitely precious, he did not regard it as an unmixed source of pleasure. In particular, the early struggles of a serious artist are generally somewhat distressing both to the sufferer and his near relations. There is an intense interest in the artistic object, with a constant failure to embody it in adequate artistic representation, resulting in painful fluctuations of spirits and temper. Hence the sympathy of the St. Ives fisherwife for the students painting on the foreshore: "What a pity them poor artises do get so set on it."

Some years ago the hedonist theory of art would have needed a formal refutation. But it is not held now with the same tenacity, except by those who insist on solving all philosophical problems by a reference to biology. No

biological philosopher ever begins an analysis of human experience at a higher point than the mammalia. Mr. Herbert Spencer indeed starts his *Data of Ethics* with remarks on infusoria and mollusca. Conformably to this tendency, what we may term the Bauble-Theory connects human art with the taste of bower-birds in decorating their nests with scraps of bright colour, and with the gratification of the pea-hen in the magnificence of her spouse's tail. Coming down to man the bauble-theory puts the beginning of art in the sensuous pleasure which primitive man feels in bright colours, simple harmonies and alliterative or rhyming jingles of words. The truth is that such sensuously pleasant things cannot be more than the material or vehicle of art; its essence cannot lie in them. Grant Allen's *Physiological Æsthetics*, excellent so far as it goes, does not really touch the central matter of art at all. It would be equally possible to write a Physiological Ethics or Physiological Theory of Knowledge which should circle round among the external conditions of morality and knowledge without telling us anything about their inner reality.

The gist of the matter comes to light when we consider that only some pleasant objects are suitable for art, those namely that we can enjoy consistently with an unselfish interest in their permanence and welfare. Things that we can only enjoy in a self-regarding way, such as food, can with difficulty be treated artistically. A picture of the most sumptuously spread dinner-table would not be admissible as fine art. The Dutch kitchen-pictures of fruit, vegetables, and game, those of Mieris for example, though painted with an unselfish interest in the forms and colours of the objects, suffer decidedly from their material associations. It is the pleasures of sight and hearing that are specially artistic because they can be enjoyed consistently with self-detached interest in the object for its own sake, and are not diminished by being shared with others. Selfish pleasure is the death of art.

It may have been noticed that I have so far not used

the current term "æsthetic" in regard to art-experience. As a synonym for "artistic" I think it highly objectionable, because it suggests the reduction of the appreciation of beauty to a form of perception. But it may be usefully employed to describe those sensations and pleasures which, in virtue of their refined quality, are capable of being used for art. If we use æsthetic in this sense we ought to note that no experience, however æsthetically refined, rises to the level of art unless it contains the element of objective interest. I have read of some character in fiction who invented a scent-organ, consisting of rows of bottles filled with various scents, and a mechanical arrangement like a key-board for opening the stoppers. Was the pleasure got from this instrument artistic? Probably not. We cannot of course be certain that to a man of exceptional disposition scents may not suggest as much objective content as musical sounds to other people. But if not, his experience is merely æsthetic. The scent of a rose has great artistic value because it enhances an artistic interest which is already there. Without the flower, the perfume avails nothing for art.

§ 13. Both the emotive and the hedonist theories of art are supported by a tendency which has had a baleful influence on speculation, far outside the sphere of art-philosophy—the tendency of subjective idealism. The two theories have their common point in the ignoring of the object and the endeavour to seek the source of the art-interest entirely within the subject. The same tendency in another form is countenanced by Hegel when he raises the question, "What is man's need to produce works of art?"[1] and answers that it is self-reduplication. As a *thinking* consciousness, man, says Hegel, "draws out of himself and makes explicit *for himself*, that which he is." "Man as mind reduplicates himself." "He has the impulse . . . to produce himself, and therein at the same time to recognise himself. This purpose he achieves by the modification of external things

[1] *Introduction to Philosophy of Fine Art*, trans. by Bosanquet, p. 57.

upon which he impresses the seal of his inner being, and then finds repeated in them his own characteristics. Man does this in order as a free subject to strip the outer world of its stubborn foreignness, and to enjoy in the shape and fashion of things a mere external reality of himself." "The universal need for expression in art lies, therefore, in man's rational impulse to exalt the inner and outer world into a spiritual consciousness for himself, as an object in which he recognises his own self." And this process is termed a "reduplication of himself." Professed interpreters of Hegel may question what part self-reduplication plays in his art-theory as a whole; but the foregoing extracts from the *Introduction* are enough to bring home to him at least a subjective-idealising tendency, a tendency which cannot fail to lead astray. Man needs art because it is a form of objective interest which is essential to his higher life. The objects are akin to himself; but they are not himself, nor does he try to make them so.

Had Hegel's expressions not been worded so as to exclude the objective interest of art (as they apparently do), we might have taken them as merely emphasising its subjective side which is no less essential than the objective. For though art is not self-reduplication, it might fairly be described as self-expression. The artist's work is always *his* work; the appreciation which it embodies is *his* appreciation. When the artist has his completed work, the poem or the picture, before him, he sees that it embodies not only the beauty which interested him to make the work, but also his interest in the beauty. Hegel's preoccupation with the subjective element must not drive us into exclusive preoccupation with the objective.

§ 14. The admiring appreciation of personal life, which is the mainspring of art, is the mainspring of knowledge and morality also. There is not room here to justify the parallelism in detail; but it is important to forestall the notion that art is an anomalous province of our life. Of both knowledge and morality it may be said that they are

unselfishly enthusiastic, and that the objects of their enthusiasm are persons, or things with personal qualities.

The value of enthusiasm in knowledge-seeking is tolerably well seen now. No one can fail to acknowledge it who remembers that knowing is, primarily, a creative process. This last point, truly, is often overlooked. When knowledge is thought of as a cut-and-dried system stored in literary warehouses the man of knowledge is identified with the book-worm. But we should rather think of the student as an ardent creator; a maker, not a manipulator, of theories. Knowledge must be distinguished from erudition.

Another distinction will vindicate the unselfish character of knowledge. Many things which people need to know cannot be dignified by that lofty term, the fluctuations of the tallow-market for example. Knowledge must be distinguished from information. A vast mass of materially useful information about food and clothing and travelling and so on is only learnt by people because it is useful, and is forgotten as soon as it becomes useless. We shall have later (in § 24) to make a similar distinction between art and manufacture. What really deserves the name of knowledge is a content which is worth knowing for itself; a content which fascinates our interest because of the intellectual force which it embodies.

What the objects are which excite the enthusiasm of knowledge may be ascertained by the rough-and-ready method of taking down a volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and turning over the leaves. You will find that the greater part of it, and the most interesting part of it, deals with mankind's proper study, man. The natural sciences, which are falsely supposed to be more "scientific" than the human, are apparently, but only apparently, an exception. For the universal or generic judgment of science should be interpreted teleologically, *i.e.* as expressing purpose or system in its content. And purpose and system are conceptions which are fully intelligible only in reference to the conduct of personal agents. The interpretation of personal conduct is really

the most characteristic form of knowlege. In nature we are interested from a two-fold motive. Where it is alive it has a claim on us merely from its vitality. Bits of life are always interesting to a living mind. To the mature intellect it is interesting because we trace in it subtle far-reaching design.

On the essential part which the enthusiasm of humanity plays in moral experience I must be even briefer; the more so as I hope to deal with the matter some day in another place. Perhaps it is enough now to appeal to the consensus of Christian moralists, who, using the term charity, make this enthusiasm the basis of all virtue.

All this must not be understood to mean that art is identical with, or merely another form of, knowledge and morality. There is, as just explained, a generic kinship between them; but, beyond that, there is a specific difference which is irreducible and also indefinable. They are three distinct ways of appreciating our fellow-men. Taken together, they may be said to constitute our Higher Life.

§ 15. Unselfish appreciation of men, which in its stronger form is enthusiasm, is thus the quality which gives to our higher pursuits a common generic character. But, more than that, it is the interfusion of the same quality which gives to objects the capacity of being interesting. For it is certain that interesting objects have a definite common quality. Enthusiasm does not operate *in vacuo*, or attach itself to any object at random. People often speak as if it did; but this presupposes an unreal detachment of the subject from its object, parallel, it may be remarked, to that *liberum arbitrium indifferentiæ* which so grievously caricatures the true freedom of the will. Enthusiasm is only felt for appropriate objects.

If we study the persons for whom we feel it reasonable to be enthusiastic, we shall see that they are themselves persons of enthusiasm. Fundamentally, enthusiasm is what differentiates the man from the Yahoo. The student of our Saxon Heptarchy, who has never read beyond

Milton's history, will think disgustedly of those troubled times as "the fighting of kites and crows," because he can see nothing in them but endless jarring selfishness; to the modern historian they are interesting, because he recognises in them the "Making of England," the seed-time of a noble culture.

In regard to objects below the human level a good deal was said to the present purpose when it was proved that their artistically interesting qualities are personal, or at least, vital. It is only necessary to carry the same line of argument a step farther. Let us raise the question, What is it that makes living creatures valuable? Our modern sense of the value of life is certainly not primitive. Uncultured men destroy life with no compunction on the slightest grounds. What is at the bottom, not only of modern humanitarianism, but also of that interest in living forms, which moves the great throng of naturalists? I cannot see that the mere fact of animation gives much claim. If a creature has no beauty or intricacy of plan, or is not closely connected with higher creatures, it is nothing. As a fact, perhaps no form of life fulfils these conditions of exclusion. But some come so near it that not one man in a hundred thousand takes interest in them. Compare, for example, the popularity of birds with the neglect of spiders, and you will find an example of my principle. Birds are not enthusiasts; but they look as if an enthusiast had made them. We enjoy their beauty like children charmed by a picture and careless of the painter.

A characteristic of art and of its allied experiences which might be deduced from what has been already said is its strength of vital feeling. It would be a plain contradiction to think of enthusiasm as languid and decadent; and the same is true of its objects. The higher life is strong and the objects of its interest are full of strong life. Men, beasts and plants, mountains and streams, clouds and air must, in order that the artist may love them, be full of such life as is allowed them. Beauty is a kind of high vitality; ugliness belongs to

death, decay, and disease, or the disorder that leads to them.

III. The Separateness of Art

§ 16. So far we have been considering facts which show the 'altogetherness' of the elements of the higher life; we come now to facts which show their separateness. Not that the facts are inconsistent or that we are reduced to an 'antinomy.' I only mean that while at some times and in some respects we feel a unity conjoining art, knowledge, and morality, otherwise we feel that they are separate from each other.

The separateness has in the first place what may be called a formal or outward aspect. Art is a discontinuous interest both in our experiencing of it and also in regard to the objects of the interest. The former kind of discontinuity is too generally recognised to require proof. Art lies outside the vital needs of our existence and therefore must always be an episode. In regard to the object also the artistic interest is episodic in a way that morality and knowledge can never be. True moral interest, such as admiration for a noble action, implies a reference to the character of the doer of the action, in other words, a reference to a system that is both continuous and extensive. True epistemonic interest is not an interest in detached facts, but in facts which bear on some big system, preferably that supreme, enveloping system which we call reality. We cannot pick up a piece of knowledge or of moral interest and then drop it and have done with it. This, however, is the case in art. A painter sees a pretty child in the street, gets it for a model, paints it with all his might, sells the picture and, possibly, never thinks of the child again, save in that isolated regard.

In the products of art both the subjective and the objective discontinuity are exemplified. The picture embodies a mood of the artist; and also an aspect of the model. Both mood and aspect are, as it were, snap-

shotted in one self-justifying presentation. Hence the self-containedness of the artistic product. Every one knows that the good picture need not be in the least useful, or teach a moral lesson, or be strictly veracious. But its independence within its own sphere needs emphasising too. We do not very greatly care if we cannot harmonise the various plays of Shakespeare, we do not care, that is, if the consistency of characters which appear in more than one play be not maintained; or if different plays exhibit inconsistent views of life on the poet's part. It is true that this self-containedness is not absolute. We should get more pleasure from the whole series of Shakespeare's plays if we could view them, not merely as detached efforts, but as the expression of a continuously developing poetic genius. But in the main the single poem, picture, or symphony stands alone. Its main interest lies within its four corners. It shines by its own light; not borrowing much light, or reflecting it.

It would have been possible, had not the empirical proof seemed more solid, to have appealed earlier in this essay (in § 6) to the discontinuity of the artistic interest in aid of my thesis that its object must be humanity. A continuous interest might be thought to be interesting from its continuity alone. It might be argued that the claim of geometry does lie in the fact that it is an immense complex system which the most diligent explorer can never exhaust; and an attempt (though I think a fallacious attempt) might be made in this way to show that we can be enthusiastic without being enthusiastic over man. But take away this element of continuity and by what can we explain the claim of art but by its embodiment of human nature? Where else can this perennial fount of unselfish interest be supposed to lie?

§ 17. But this formal characteristic of discontinuity does not give the essential difference of art from its kindred pursuits. That difference really consists in the felt quality of the artistic experience and in the quality of the objects for which it is felt. Art, knowledge, and morality are different ways of feeling appreciation for our fellowmen.

Art is a kind of felt experience whose quality is definite, irreducible, and indefinable. In support of this, an appeal can only be made to self-observation. Let us suppose ourselves interested in some great and good man, Cardinal Newman, for example. Then our interest may be either moral, and move us to exhibit our admiration in conduct; or it may be epistemonic and move us to explore his character with a scientific curiosity; or it may be artistic and move us to paint his portrait or make him the hero of a poem or tale. My argument is that, in the main, we should have a different kind of experience in each case.

The chief objection to this would come from those who take a view of art which seems to me to be quite mistaken. Put shortly, this view is that the artistic attitude is to say "How fine!" and do nothing. It is easy to see how this notion arises. In the first place artistic experience is supposed to be typified, not by the artist, but by the non-performing connoisseur. This is a common and excusable error. But then, by a fatal and easy extension, any sort of non-performing admirer is credited with an artistic experience, and the video-meliora-proboque debauchee is said to look at morality in an 'artistic' way. This is not art but morality-and-water; a barren velleity towards virtue.

§ 18. On the objective side, the separateness comes out very plainly. Defining excellent persons as those who have strong unselfish appreciations, we may say that the artist's main interest is in excellent persons. But it is also true that not all excellent persons interest him to an equal degree. The artistic sort are more interesting than the other two.

This point may be brought out in a concrete form by asking: What kind of face is the painter most attracted by? This may sound a hopelessly vague question; but we must try to think of the typical artist in his most characteristic moods. In all such fluctuating matters one may discover a centre of gravity, so to speak. Allowing, then, for varieties of mood and idiosyncrasy I think it true to say that the most interesting sort

of face to paint is that of an artistic person; not necessarily that of an artist, but of some one with strong artistic appreciations. The faces of men notable for other excellences have interest too; but not so much. Moreover, it is rare to find the other excellences, when they reach any considerable pitch, entirely disjoined from the artistic. Certainly it is not prettiness which makes a face paintable. The portraits in the Royal Academy which we gaze at are those of persons full of character, statesmen, warriors, philanthropists, men of science, literature, and art. The ladies who are mere beauties we pass with an indulgent smile.

The same fact comes home to us more strikingly from the negative side. There are people of our acquaintance neither stupid nor morally objectionable who impress us as alien to art. Their faces, figures, and dresses offer no material for painting; their conversation and way of life have no suggestions for poetry or romance. Their houses are oppressive with commonplace; and an artist would find it very hard to work in them. Now, if we consider why these people are not artistically interesting we shall find it is because they are themselves not interested in art. They do not really care for romantic fiction, or poetry, or pictures, or noble music. They may recite or clatter on the piano; but it is all superficial. Their houses may contain fine furniture, or even costly china locked up in glass cabinets; but there are none of those personal touches which show that the owners have a genuine sensibility to the beautiful.

We need not delay long over considering the separateness in regard to things. Most interesting things attract us both from an epistemonic and an artistic point of view. Flowers, for instance, are attractive both to the painter and the morphological botanist, though for quite different reasons. But we do not always get this combination. Few things are more interesting to the understanding than the inner histology of the human frame; nothing is more hopelessly impossible for purposes of art. The subjective ground of this objective quality lies in the

fact that the human inside is a thing which we could neither synthesise nor analyse with the distinctive artistic experience.

§ 19. We may now touch on some causes which hinder the general recognition of the separateness of the artistic experience. One of them is that misconception of the artistic attitude as the attitude of the non-performing admiration, which was mentioned recently.

Another cause, trivial-seeming yet powerful, is language —the application of artistic terms to non-artistic things. It is common to hear men speak of a pretty checkmate or a beautiful operation in surgery. ("'Lovely sight if Slasher does it,' remarked Mr. Bob Sawyer.") But such things are not really beautiful in the sense that a picture is beautiful. The good checkmate or good operation are doubtless, owing to their neatness and effectiveness, as satisfying in their own way as the good picture; but the satisfaction is not of the same kind. People who overlook this will talk of the artistic satisfaction to be got from checkmates and operations. But the use of the artistic word has no more real appropriateness than the common cook's term "beautiful" to describe a nice pudding.

Another cause is the transference of art-forms to the service of interests which are not only external to art but external to the higher life altogether. Some of these interests are base, and then we feel that the forms are degraded in a painful way. Usually the interests are well enough in their own sphere. As examples may be cited many of the popular pictures of war or hunting. Such pictures *may* possess artistic merit. But often there is no more art in them than in a photograph of a prize-fight.

The case is rather different where art-forms are used for moral or epistemonic purposes. This is not infrequent in modern days; there are examples in Browning. Much of the interest of *The Ring and the Book* is ethical or psychological rather than artistic. To say this implies

no complaint against Browning. Any great thinker has a right to give his message in any form he finds most convenient. It is our own fault if the boundaries of art are confused in our minds thereby. The same transference of form is seen in painting. For example may be mentioned a recent Academy picture of Mr. Gow's, *The Great Nile Dam at Assouan*, which shows us a piece of the half-finished wall, railway trucks laden with Portland cement, some natives mixing mortar, the eminent English contractor under an umbrella standing with a little group round an engineer who traces plans with a walking-stick in the sand. All most interesting; but not art in the same sense that Mr. Watts' pictures are art.

And finally, there is the fact that the separateness is not absolute. In art there is always some admixture of knowledge and morals; and in the highest art a great deal. We shall have to consider this further by and by.

§ 20. We find the same separateness in the case of knowledge. To the man of knowledge what is mainly interesting is the minds and experience of intellectual men; or, to speak more precisely, of men in general on their distinctively intellectual side. For, whereas art is somewhat aside from the main business of life, knowledge is diffused through the whole of it. In this connection I mean by the man of knowledge not only the professional scientist who, like Sir Isaac Newton, lives to explore and think; but also the man of intellectual power who, throughout the conduct of his life, shows an unselfish love of intellectual construction and comprehension.

So also with morality. The interest of the virtuous man is centred in virtuous men. It is true that other excellences of character awake in us something of the same sort of admiration as moral goodness,[1] but in a much inferior degree. There are phrases current which might lead one to suppose that the greatest saints think

[1] Cf. my article entitled "Duty" in *International Journal of Ethics* for April, 1897.

less of virtuous men than of sinners. This is not so. Sinners are interesting in so far as they are not hopeless, but still have the makings of good men. Once they are finally judged and relegated to hell, no one imagines that the saints care anything about them.

§ 21. I must now meet an objection which has perhaps been in the reader's mind some time, since I said (in § 15) that the proper objects of enthusiasm are enthusiastic people. The objection will be that I have made each man's artistic, intellectual, and moral qualities to depend on his appreciation of the same qualities in others, and that thus a vicious circle is made. The answer is that the circle is only apparent. In each case the quality has a substantive existence in the mind of its possessor. *A* has certain definite mental contents which we call art or knowledge or moral goodness; they are not less definite and real, and not less his own because he could not have them without knowing *B*, *C*, *D* and others who possess the like. We may illustrate from the case of love. *A* loves *B*; and the chief quality which makes *B* lovable is that he is of a loving disposition, manifested in particular towards *A*. And so from *B's* point of view. The two loves are mutually dependent; but the relation of mutual dependence does not destroy their several reality.

All this would have an important bearing on the social aspect of art and the rest of the higher life, if that were the matter of our discussion. Society is not merely the field in which we exercise the qualities of the higher life; the qualities themselves are essentially social. And thus we see how mistaken it would be to try, as Henry Sidgwick once did,[1] to determine the Ultimate Good by considering what a man would choose who found himself solitary in a universe.

§ 22. I said just now (in § 19) that the separation between the departments of our higher life is not absolute. In the first place they are connected at the root. If we cast our thoughts over any of our artistic actions we see

[1] *Methods of Ethics*, 1st ed. p. 374.

that in them we exercise not only the special artistic faculty, but also a kind of consciousness which, if not moral, is at least akin to morality; and moreover a kind of intelligence which if not identical with knowledge is, at least, akin to it.[1]

But, notwithstanding this basic connection, each of these interests in its ordinary definite form is mainly concerned with itself. If we try to combine two of them, we run the risk of spoiling both. To enter upon an artistic task in a spirit of moral zeal generally impairs the artistic result. To quote an obvious example, novels with a moral purpose are generally bad fiction without being good sermons. And so with an attempted combination of art and knowledge. Any one who has tried to write philosophy with much attention to style knows how carefully the style-interest must be kept subordinate. Otherwise phrase-making will get the upper hand and truth succumb. And yet we can imagine this natural limitation transcended. We can imagine, perhaps on rare occasions meet with, objects which engage all our higher interests at once; we can imagine occasions when we could put forth all our higher faculties in harmonious co-operation. The possibility of such a transcendence helps to prevent that recognition of the usual separateness of the higher interests which it is the object of this section of my essay to demonstrate.

IV. Artistic Valuation

§ 23. We come now to the questions connected with artistic valuation. I wish to draw out the full philosophic import of the judgment that a given work of art has artistic value. Five main questions at least may be raised: (*a*) What is it exactly that is pronounced valuable? Is it the work merely? Or is it the work as the expression of a consciousness? (*b*) By whom is the

[1] For this reason I coined in § 1 a new term 'epistemonic' as the adjective of knowledge; since there is an element in both art and morals which might be called 'cognitive' or 'intellectual.'

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judgment pronounced? To whom are we to look for the judgment? And whose judgment is the most trustworthy? (*c*) For whom is the work valuable? A thing of value which is valuable for no one in particular is of course a false abstraction. The valuable thing must be felt as valuable for some one; and for some one more than for others. We have to ask: For whom? (*d*) The judger who pronounces the work valuable must have a standing-ground for his judgment. The ascertainment of this ground is the most important point of the whole inquiry into value. (*e*) What authority has our judgment of value? On what do we rely in meeting those who reject it in theory or oppose it in practice? What guarantee have we of the permanence of the judgment?

These are the main questions about value, and we shall find that the answers must all be made from the personal point of view.

It is to be noted that I am only propounding philosophic questions about artistic value as opposed to others which might be called professional. If a painting-master were asked by a pupil why he thought a picture good he would probably specify various merits of technique or composition. He would be quite right from his own point of view. But these professional matters are external to that inner reality with which we are concerned now.

§ 24. (*a*) One frequently hears it said that a cardinal difference between a moral act and a work of art is that the former has no value apart from the fact that it manifests the character of the doer, whereas in the latter the doer's character is indifferent. As we have seen (in § 16) there are facts which lend colour to this statement. But, in the main, it is false. An effect of colour or music which is the outcome of chance is never the same to us as one which is the work of human thought. What we should value in the work of art is the consciousness of the artist manifested therein. If we fail in doing this we fail in the duties of the critic. Perhaps these duties in their fulness are too onerous for

human nature. We cannot usually trouble about the consciousness of the tailor who makes our coat (though the higher political economy tells us that we should), and we do not usually trouble about the consciousness of the painter of the average pictures on the walls of the Royal Academy. But it is only the limitation of our knowledge and the dulness of our sympathy and imagination which keep us from feeling the artist's personality behind his work.

The consciousness which the work manifests must be of the distinctively artistic kind. That means in the first place that it must be vivid, free, creative. Here we have the mark to distinguish art from manufacture. The manufacturer is not a creator but a copier, a reproducer of the thoughts of others, or of his own when they have got stale. He works up to a standard externally prescribed, and lives upon a lower and colder plane of consciousness. Here the parallel is close between art and morals. Mechanical conformity is death to both. It is the chief artistic danger of modern society with its vast swamping industrial organisations, that crafts tend to be carried on less and less in the true artistic spirit.

In the second place, to say that the consciousness must be distinctively artistic means that it is not to be confused with the kindred experiences of knowledge and morality, or to be valued because of moral and epistemonic elements in it. The arguments of the previous section of this essay were intended to obviate the possibility of such a confusion. Each experience has its own quality and its value lies in the perfection of the quality. The interests of art, knowledge and morality are autotelic interests. What the quality of art is, cannot be defined, though it may be indicated by description. It is an irreducible fact at which definition stops. All we can say of it is that it is a distinct mode of appreciating men.

In this relative independence of art we find the meaning of that much-abused shibboleth "Art for art's sake." Some who could not or did not want to understand how

art is akin to the other higher interests have talked as though an artist were all the better for being a reprobate and a dunce. That heresy is far from extinct, though it does not enjoy the favour of a dozen years ago.

§ 25. (*b*) Now, who is to say when the work of art embodies vivid consciousness of the true artistic kind? Obviously, there is no one who has such an opportunity of knowing as the artist himself. The case is the same as in morals. No one is in such a position as the agent to tell the spirit of his action, if he would only do so.

There are, however, well-known causes which impair our confidence in the artist's judgment of his own work. For one, there is personal vanity. The artist feels vaguely that he must have produced a great work, because he is sure that he is a great man. Another cause is pre-occupation with technique. There are many effects, not very important in themselves, which the artist is apt to prize because they are difficult to accomplish. This is particularly common in music and painting. In times of decadence this secondary technical interest is sometimes all that survives. For these reasons we are perhaps more inclined to rely on the judgment of the artist, not at the time of his doing the work, but when he looks back on it after a lapse of time. His consciousness is clearer then. But we must also remember that it is feebler, and that new prejudices may arise to obscure old truth.

So far as the critic is worthy of attention on a question of value, he must take the position of an artist-at-second-hand, *i.e.* he must by an exercise of sympathetic imagination go through the creative process of the artist's consciousness. The insight of any critic is limited; though there are people of little creative force who have the power of re-creation in an extraordinary degree. But we trust it because of its comparative immunity from personal prepossessions. Still more do we trust the verdict of many critics, succeeding each other through ages. This is our nearest approach to infallibility. The ground of our confidence is not merely the number of the voices, but rather our conviction of the organic unity of

human nature. The contemporaries of Sophocles judged the *Antigone* beautiful for reasons organically connected with Greek life; and successive generations have ratified their verdict. We now regard it as true for all ages because the long consensus of opinion shows that the play appeals to sentiments which are not merely Greek but fundamentally human; and we are sure that the foundations of human nature will not change.

§ 26. (*c*) A valuable experience is, of course, valuable for some person. Primarily, the person for whom art is valuable is the artist himself. If any one asked: For whom was Shakespeare's artistic life a good? the answer would be: In the first place, for Shakespeare. And this is not an exceptional rule for exceptional men, but merely the common rule for the valuation of human life. We cannot say of the rank and file of humanity that *A's* life is valuable because it furthers the lives of *B*, *C*, and *D*, and so on. Nor can we say it of the chiefs.

But to this a necessary supplement must be made. It is essential to the artist's character as a lover of men that he should feel such an interest in human life as is inconsistent with the selfishness of keeping his creative gift to himself. He must at least intend that his work shall be enjoyed by society. Apart from this, the saying "Art for the artist" might be misunderstood in a sense contrary to the whole tenor of my argument. In Huysmans' novel *À Rebours* the hero shuts himself hermetically from all contact with the world, and lives entirely for the enjoyment of his æsthetic feelings. That is just the sort of life I do not regard as typically artistic. Artistic experience with its outcome of performance is good for the artist in the same way that a saintly life is good for the saint. It is the expression of an enthusiasm whose blessedness it is to spend and be spent in the following of a high ideal.

"Art for the artist" should reconcile us to those apparently painful cases where artistic work is lost without contributing commensurately to the common enjoyment. The case is more frequent still in morals. How often does

moral effort fall unheeded to the ground! And yet it was good for the doer that he did it.

§ 27. (*d*) We come now to the most important question of all: On what ground does the judger stand when he judges a work of art excellent? Here we touch upon the ultimate basis of artistic value, indeed of all value whatever. The answer is that he stands upon the ground of immediate personal experience; he judges the work excellent because he feels or intuitively perceives it to be excellent.

Our previous discussions have shown that this affirmation may be analysed further. Let us make the analysis by representing to ourselves a concrete case of such a judgment. Of course it must be an artist judging his own finished work. Now the work has value because of the human character embodied therein; character, as we have seen, primarily of the artistic kind. This human character in the work belongs partly to his object, partly comes from himself. If this sound obscure, let us make the example still more definite. Let the artist be a painter and his work a portrait. Then the human character seen in the painting by the painter is partly that of his model; and partly it is his own; for the portrait is *his* work, *his* interpretation. The portrait in fact has an objective and a subjective side. Both sides are known to be excellent by immediate experience. But, for the subjective, feeling is the more appropriate term; and for the objective, intuition. When the artist was doing his best to paint that portrait he *felt* that his action was excellent or noble or valuable. And he *recognised by intuition* the excellence of the character revealed in the model's face. The ground of our judgment of moral value is the same. We ask: Why did you judge it good to nurse your friend through his fever? and the agent will answer: I knew by feeling or intuition that it was good. On analysis we shall find that this judgment involves both a recognition of the excellence of the agent's friend, and also a recognition of the goodness of his own purpose in tending the sick man. Beyond this point analysis cannot take us. I have only to add the

caution that the objective and the subjective sides, separable in abstract statement, are not separable in reality. You cannot appreciate without appreciating somebody; and conversely (if the tautology may be forgiven) you cannot appreciate somebody without feeling appreciation. That is only one more example of the essential subjective-objective two-sidedness of our conscious life.

§ 28. It will be evident to the reader that the foregoing account of the basis of artistic valuation is a form of intuitionism. But there are, I venture to think, advantages in this particular form which are not shared by others.

(*α*) Intuitions, in general, are commonly described too much in intellectual terms. This is specially noticeable of moral intuitions. According to the common account, a man does an act and his conscience, supervening, tells him it is right. He sees another do it, and his intuitive faculty is similarly on hand to give him information. In opposition to this I would urge that there is no such separateness in the judging faculty. *A* nurses his friend *B* through typhus. He has a feeling that it is good to do so, a feeling impelling him to the action. When, in the accepted phrase, his conscience tells him he is right, that is only his feeling-experience become self-conscious and articulate. So with the objective side of the action. It is *A*'s love for *B* that causes *A* to face danger on *B*'s behalf. The intuitive faculty does not thereupon step in from outside and pronounce that *B* is lovable. *A*'s intuition is simply his love for *B* come to self-consciousness. I have taken the examples from morals rather than from art because ethical intuitionism is the more developed. But the account of the matter would be on parallel lines if *A* were painting *B*'s portrait instead of nursing him. Another way of putting the matter would be to say that the artistic intuition is a function of the whole self, rather than a separate faculty in the self.

(*β*) This leads on to the next point in which my view of the artistic intuition may claim an advantage,

i.e. that art is not left in isolation, but is brought into the vital system of the individual and of society. Nothing is more unsatisfactory from a logical point of view, than an intuition which comes from no one knows where and issues orders no one knows why. Now we cannot in the strict sense explain the origin of the artistic intuition any more than the origin of any other primary function of our nature. But if, as I believe, civilisation is mainly founded on those kinds of unselfish human interest which we call knowledge and morality, it is easily intelligible that we should have a parallel interest, which we call art, closely akin and lending powerful support to the other two. It is intelligible, too, that moral goodness, intellectual power, high vitality, and strength should be approved by the intuition. For these are prime elements of welfare in the individual and the social system. They are conditions and consequences at least, if nothing more, of an artistic disposition.

(γ) There is, on my view, no difficulty in explaining the variations of the intuition in different men, different epochs, different societies. A lack of flexibility is the most notorious fault of the common intuitionism. But let the basis of art be an interest in men, and then, plainly, artists will appreciate those forms of human excellence which actually come before them. "But," it will be asked, "is there not now too much flexibility? Have you not in making your intuition so flexible, destroyed its unity?" My answer is that there is unity in the intuition so long as there is substantial unity on the subjective or feeling side of it, and substantial unity in the objects which it approves of. Suppose that we come upon a strange artist who is producing work which he affirms to be art. The work may not be quite like any other work in the world, but it *is* art so long as he feels in doing it as true artists feel, and so long as his object is akin to the objects that true artists admire.

§ 29. But though I believe in intuitionism I do not believe in the intuitional method as commonly understood. We know Bentham's amusing account of that method as

applied to morals. "The various systems that have been formed concerning the standard of right and wrong may all be reduced to the principle of sympathy and antipathy. One account may serve for all of them. They consist all of them in so many contrivances for avoiding the obligation of appealing to any external standard, and for prevailing upon the reader to accept of the author's sentiment or opinion as a reason for itself. The phrases different, but the principle the same. It is curious enough to observe the variety of inventions men have hit upon, and the variety of phrases they have brought forward, in order to conceal from the world and, if possible. from themselves, this very general and therefore very pardonable self-sufficiency. One man says he has a thing made on purpose to tell him what is right and what is wrong, and that it is called a *moral sense*; and then he goes to work at his ease, and says such a thing is right, and such a thing is wrong—why? 'because my moral sense tells me it is.' Another man comes and alters the phrase, leaving out *moral* and putting in *common* in the room of it,"[1] and so on. There is a strong element of caricature in this witty diatribe of Bentham's; but he is right in his main point, that a purely introspective attempt to determine the content of an intuition runs the risk of consecrating what merely favours our private advantage or prejudice. There is nothing to be gained by tying oneself down to the introspective method. If an intuition is generally diffused among men we can ascertain it by studying their conduct. If human enthusiasm be the true motive of art, then a study of artists will disclose the fact. In any case, this is the standpoint adopted in the present essay—intuitionism with the method of empiricism.

But we should be quite ignoring the distinctive character of artistic experience if we thought we could ascertain what is right in art by mere statistical inquiry. We should be neglecting the personal affirmation of value implicit in every genuine artistic judgment. This

[1] *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, chap. ii.

may be illustrated by contrasting with art a kind of judgment in which no value is involved. Let the judgment in question be one concerning fashion in dress. "Crinolines are becoming fashionable again," says an eminent *modiste*, and we assent or dissent on purely statistical grounds. "Crinolines are beautiful." This we cannot accept or deny without a much deeper affirmation.

§ 30. (*e*) We come now to the last of the questions connected with artistic valuation, its authority. We saw that the valuation is made by a personal affirmation. When we meet with people who reject our valuation, is it merely one *ipse dixit* against another? Having regard to the amount of Bad Taste around us, one might expect that we should have to combat a large number of recalcitrants. But we shall see that this is not the case when we come to analyse the matter. What is comprehensively called bad taste might in many cases be more appropriately termed rudimentary taste. We cannot blame a savage for preferring the music of the tom-tom to that of the piano. The latter instrument has simply not come within his artistic range. And on most points of art a great number, perhaps the majority, of our friends are in an analogous position. The stigma of bad taste should only be fixed on those who choose the worse when they might easily have chosen the better. As causes of ordinary bad taste we may enumerate Fossilism, that is, a stupid adherence to artistic forms that may have been very well in their day, but should now be abandoned for others more adequate; Vulgarity, which leads us to prefer forms conducive to self-glorification; Crankiness, or the undue insistence on some element which has only a subordinate value. None of these kinds of bad taste has any special philosophical significance. Their valuation is at bottom the standard valuation stunted or distorted. They have no strength of conviction, no principle to oppose to us.

§ 31. The case is different with the Decadent. It is true that he proffers no positive principle; but he is

great in his denials. We believe in life; he disbelieves in it, despises it. If we traced this disbelief to its source, we should find that it arises from want of affection for his fellow-men.

From this decay of the root of interest in him we may deduce the characteristics of the decadent. In art he is, according to a well-known and well-approved definition, a worker who thinks more of the parts than of the whole. As some one has said of Mr. Swinburne, he cares not for life but for style. In criticism, where he abounds, he is a seeker after subtlety, an amateur of filigree, a worshipper of *la nuance*. To him the dexterity of the word-artist, who captures a just-perceptible meaning floating on the boundary of thought, is more precious than the first-hand statement of a fundamental truth. Superficially, decadence is the comminution of values.

But there is a deeper meaning in him. Let us see if we can trace it in a concrete example. The following may be quoted as a typical decadent appreciation of literature:[1]—"He was indifferent or contemptuous towards the writers of the Latin Augustan age; Virgil seemed to him thin and mechanical, Horace a detestable clown; the fat redundancy of Cicero and the dry constipation of Cæsar alike disgusted him; Sallust, Livy, Juvenal, even Tacitus and Plautus, though for these he had words of praise, seemed to him for the most part merely the delights of pseudo-literary readers." After some slight commending of Lucan and high admiration of Petronius, the appreciation goes on: "But the special odour which the Christians had by the fourth century imparted to decomposing pagan Latin was delightful to him in such authors as Commodian of Gaza,[2] whose tawny, sombre, and tortuous style he even preferred to Claudian's sonorous blasts, in which the trumpet of paganism was last heard in the world. He was also able to maintain interest in Prudentius, Sedulius and a host of unknown

[1] Havelock Ellis, *Affirmations*, p. 181.
[2] A writer of religious acrostics.

Christians who combined Catholic fervour with a Latinity which had become, as it were, completely putrid, leaving but a few shreds of torn flesh for the Christians to 'marinate in the brine of their new tongue.'"

In such a statement of literary preferences, to which any number of parallels might be found, we may discern that, if it were possible for the decadent to have a substantive principle, it would be the Excellence of Death. The praise of death with its allied phenomena of suicide, pessimism, and the glorification of sin is always prominent in decadence.[1] No writer can literally and seriously affirm the excellence of death, any more than he can affirm the excellence of silence; but the decadent, moth-like, is always fluttering round it.

In the present age, when conditions on the whole are favourable to the higher life, the decadent's contempt for life is not formidable. Natural selection is always refuting him. But we should feel him sorely at a time when the struggle was all up-hill, as in the centuries when the ancient civilisation was decaying. The decadent may be inconsistent and despicable, but we cannot afford to pass him with a sneer. To oppose him effectually we must be convinced that there is a supra-mundane authority behind our private affirmation, behind the consensus of society and the brute force of evolution. We must be convinced that our artistic affirmation harmonises with the spirit of the universe.

§ 32. The same feeling is felt much more strongly and with more need on occasions when men are struggling for artistic reform. Artistic reform consists in a fresh burst of enthusiasm for man and nature prompted by the perception of valuable elements of life and character hitherto overlooked, or blocked out from view by vicious tradition. A typical example is found in the English Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. To call attention to new artistic truth means a militant revolt against the entrenched representatives of the established order. This is no light matter, as the Pre-Raphaelites found; though we

[1] See L. Proal, *Le crime et le suicide passionnels*, p. 361 *sqq.*

who enjoy the fruits of victory can seldom realise how serious such a struggle was to the men who fought in it. The ardour and perseverance to carry it through are not intelligible without the conviction which would be religious if it became articulate. In the struggle for moral progress it is keenly felt and loudly expressed. We can hardly conceive a moral reformer who did not say that God was on his side. The artistic reformer does not take that tone, because the matter is not enough to justify so tremendous an appeal.

§ 33. It is necessary in conclusion to define the relation of my theory of valuation to two points on which popular opinion has expressed itself forcibly, the right of private judgment, and the accessibility of an objective criterion. On the first point I appear to harmonise with popular opinion ; on the second to disagree, though the disagreement is, I hope, superficial.

Space is lacking to analyse fully the notion of private judgment ; but evidently the insistence on it is important mainly in questions of value. In the settlement of questions of fact, on the other hand, we have to rely largely on those who are better informed than ourselves ; nor are we any the worse for doing so. It is for liberty of judgment in matters of value, more especially of moral value, that Teutonic Europe has fought so passionately and stands so jealously on guard. What it is that is claimed in this sphere may again be easily misunderstood. It is not that each man claims to be his own infallible Pope. For the strongest upholder of private judgment will admit that it is constantly mistaken. The claim is that things which are declared to be valuable in the way of art, knowledge, or morality must be valued by the individual with his free personal affirmation.

When we come to think of it, this is not a claim to make a judgment of value in one way rather than in another way ; the judgment of intrinsic value can only be made as a free personal affirmation, if it is to be made at all. For it is essential to that kind of judgment that it should be enthusiastic, and enthusiasm cannot be

felt vicariously. The phrase "liberty of conscience" really means "liberty to have a conscience," since a conscience fettered ceases to be a conscience. So in art. We cannot commission another to make our artistic judgment for us, however artistic he may be. To put the matter in an aphorism which will cover the whole range of intrinsic value: I can let another measure and weigh for me; I cannot let him love for me.

§ 34. The popular demand for an objective criterion is strong; but it is not at all clear, and has led to the formulation of some impossible theories, such as that the artistically valuable may be ascertained by reference to Eternal Laws, or Types, of Beauty. It is hardly necessary to enter upon a refutation of these theories, which have no longer much scientific support. But it may be remarked (*a*) that they are inconsistent with the claim to private judgment; (*b*) that no one can ever tell the world what these laws or types are; they are blank forms, like Kant's categorical imperative; (*c*) that even if the laws or types in their full content were laid before us, we could never determine artistic value by the mere process of comparing artistic works with them, as a tradesman compares his own yard-measure or pint-measure with the standard of the government inspector. Such a mechanical comparison would grossly misrepresent the genuine artistic judgment.

And yet it is easy to see how the belief in an objective criterion has arisen. One source of it is the feeling, of which I have recently spoken, that good art has a superhuman backing. It is easy to step from this to the doctrine that you can determine by religion what good art is. This step is unwarrantable. For though we might say in Aristotelian phrase that, in the order of being, art is based on religion; yet, in the order of our knowledge, religion is based on art and on the parallel functions of our personal life.

Another source is the practical disciplinary need of having a recognised standard wherewith to put down offenders against artistic good sense. We see the same

thing in morals, where those in lawful authority cannot always be debating with anarchists on first principles. But this practical need must not make us forget that the recognised standard is but a systematisation of personal affirmations. We must not confuse it with the chimera of an objective criterion.

VII

THE FUTURE OF ETHICS: EFFORT OR ABSTENTION?

By F. W. Bussell

I

1. Ethics as the borderland of Philosophy; not properly within the domain of Pure Reason.
2. Depends on prejudices, and deals with the singular and not the uniform.
3. Yet it should be examined by Critical Philosophy although in all time Rational Ethics = Abstention. Ethical Law (unlike the Natural sphere) is only realised through voluntary effort of individuals. The Ethical agent (if he debates at all) makes a heroic wager. The final motive is "loyalty to a cause not yet won."
4. Present state of Ethics in Europe, confronted with the certainties of Science: is there room for appeal? Becomes despairing and sentimental, or Quietistic.
5. Ethics (in a wide sense, as the conduct of life according to a certain standard) proceeds on certain assumptions which are necessary before any practical maxim can be accepted.
6. These assumptions are peculiar to European Ethics; where the criterion is popular, and the emphasis is on the moral life and on ordinary duties. The Western aristocracy, as one of effort and endeavour, not of knowledge or asceticism.
7. How arises this conviction of the dignity of the Moral Life? Not from the study of Nature, which contradicts it, but from the sense of the Value of the Individual; and from the certainty of Personal life,—our only sure experience, though beyond the reach of absolute proof.
8. Ethics as a Realm of Faith.
9. Necessary assumptions of the Ethical philosopher.

II

10. Ethical systems have been mainly negative. In Greece, tend to be anti-social; where active, due to personal influences (Pythagoras and Socrates).
11. Reflection fails to give any sufficient reason for the common behaviour of men, and to confirm their convictions or prejudice, in favour of the life

of striving. Quietism, and abstention due in a great measure to the Greek passion for Unity, in speculative matters.

12. Undue emphasis in search for Unity upon *Nature* (where man has nothing to learn except maxims of prudence and experience), instead of upon History (Narcissus). Judæo-Christian ideal transforms Europe; because interest centres on the individual soul; and (in consequence, not in spite of this) devotion to a visible commonwealth arises.
13. Abstention is the result of independent (or Naturalistic) Ethics, and the peculiar tone of European Ethics is due to various forces in the early centuries of our era. Ethics seeks to attain independence after the Reformation (mainly behind current practice, and with almost exclusive emphasis on self-interest).
14. Problem of Disinterestedness is in forefront of Ethics ever since.
15. Two divergent tendencies have marked nineteenth century; one to Quietism, viz. Science; the other to Effort; Benevolence and Social Reform, Decay of the Empire of abstractions.
16. All modern movements aim at the immediate benefit of the individual (whatever form they seem to take), his freedom and his comfort. No serious fear of abandonment, of self-determination. Emphasis on Personal Relations. Individualism alone can lead to Collectivism.
17. We fight to-day against a threatened return to Oriental monism in whatever field. Le mysticisme c'est l'ennemi; for it is fatal not merely to action, but in the end to thought itself.

I

§ 1. THIS Essay endeavours to call attention to the somewhat anomalous position of ethical study in Europe. Two points especially seem worthy of note: (1) that Ethics, regarded in a broad sense as the 'science of conduct,' demands a larger basis of hypothesis than any other science; and (2) that the ideal, whether of social work or self-realisation, whether the extreme of Altruism or Individualism, is denied both by the earlier and still powerful systems of the East, and by the most modern "reformers" of ethical theory in our own continent. From the confessed obligation of personal effort and of social service acknowledged alike by Christian and Positivist from a religious or a secular standpoint, a reaction threatens us, in which participate philosophic temperaments so different as Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, Renan, F. H. Bradley, Nietzsche, and last, but not least aggressive, Mr. A. E. Taylor.[1] And first, there are peculiar difficulties in the way of those who claim for

[1] *Problem of Conduct*, Macmillan, 1901.

Ethics a secure place among the Sciences. Theology can no longer be termed, in the strict sense, scientific ; although the criticism of theologians may be conducted scientifically, and in scientific language. The mediæval Schoolmen, rationalists at heart, following the Alexandrine lead and possibly mistaking it, endeavoured to lay down rules for the advance from the lower and precarious region of Faith to the certainty of Knowledge ; just as the Mystic, emotional and ecstatic though his aim, gravely enumerates the mile-stones which the traveller must pass on the road to perfection, and employs all the artifice of the intellect to silence the intellect itself. This reign of uniform (and regular) law prevailed in theologies both of formula and fruition ; and no sympathy was felt for the guilty impostor who ventured to approach and to appropriate the Summum Bonum by the hasty short-cut of an unauthenticated method. The Reformation put an end to this tiresome and exacting rigour ; and like the political development which ran parallel, it has issued in the freedom of the individual, solely accountable, in the matters of highest import, to the inner voice. We may note a similar disintegrating tendency in the purely moral sphere. We are all keenly alive to the distressing insecurity of the domain of Ethics. It is a debatable region or border-land of Philosophy. It may indeed be questioned if, in the strict sense, it is a province of Philosophy at all. So far as concerns the inquiry into past systems, the criticism of rival doctrines, the examination into empirical psych-ology,—it must assuredly be considered a legitimate department of the all-embracing Master-Science, which "deems nothing that is human foreign" to its survey. But from the practical side, Ethical treatises are dynamically ineffective ; while from the theoretical, they do not belong to the domain of pure Reason. Viewed as *constructive*, Ethics is heavily weighted with prejudice and prepossession, derived mainly from tradition and religious influence ; as *historic* or *statistical*, it may be impartial but can hardly be normative ; but as concerned now with the present condition and future prospect of individual and race, it

must needs fall below the calm impassivity of a theoretic science. It seeks to impose what may be termed the categories of impulse and sentiment upon an outer world, which seems to repudiate their sanction. It is not easily open to the reception of truth from without; it seeks, hesitating and uncertain about its own data, to fix a precarious sphere of influence for them in a world, which if not actively malevolent and antagonistic is at least blind and unheeding.[1]

§ 2. Philosophy attempts to interpret the relations of the individual finite consciousness (or rather, that consciousness which "believes itself" to be individual, continuous, and finite) to an existent outer order, or to an outer order which is "believed to exist." To be without bias or scruple or prejudice in recording one's experience is to have a sound, wholesome, candid, and philosophic temper. In ethics this colourless receptivity is impossible. Pure Thought cannot be here supreme. In no other sphere of inquiry are the reason's axioms so plainly postulates, which it is bound to shield from profane inspection. In self-defence it takes shelter behind common instinct, emotion, and tradition. It is forced to appeal to a universal impulse or 'intuition,' and it confesses that the moral sanctions depend on a sentiment which is only cogent because it is everywhere found as a fact of universal experience; not because its arguments are intellectually irresistible. In all sciences, it is these early steps which are faltering and insecure; but Ethics, in particular, owes everything to a set of initial assumptions and hypotheses, which must to all time remain "matters of Faith." Yet these cannot (legitimately) be dethroned or reduced in number without weakening the whole fabric of convention

[1] Maeterlinck: "Kingdom of Matter": *Fortnightly Review*, Oct. 1900. "We have learnt at last that the moral world is a world wherein man is alone; a world, contained in ourselves that bears no relation to Matter, and exercises no influence on it, unless it be of the most hazardous and exceptional kind. But none the less real therefore is this world, or less infinite! If words break down when they try to tell of it, the reason is only that words are after all mere fragments of Matter, seeking to enter a sphere where Matter holds no dominion."—This is very French in tone and somewhat exaggerated, but it expresses well the sense of the chasm that cannot be bridged between 'is' and 'ought,' between Fact and Ideal, between pure Science and Faith.

and society. Reason has always claimed to use the emotions, and to guide the passions; but it has usually succeeded in controlling the latter only by expelling the former; and has settled down into that theoretical lethargy which refuses encounter with everyday life. The philosopher in the *Theætetus* is sure that he can define ideal or typical man, but fails to distinguish his next-door neighbour. But in Ethics, truly conceived, what is of moment is not this typical character, the uniform or general law, but the singular, the special. Ethics must, if applied to practice in however slender a degree, be as empirical as character;—built up from guesses and hazards, accommodated to a manifold variety of individual character and circumstance. No two situations are alike; and it may be questioned whether wide sweeping dicta (such as Kant's maxim of Universality) are ever consciously applied to solve the problem in any given case. The day for the empty dignity of such utterances is past. Morality, still swaying under the blow dealt by a Calvinistic Naturalism, seeks to build up its shattered palace on the concrete, and refuses to be consoled by any poetic appeals or abstractions of a Justice, a Retribution, which is no longer actual, nor personified. Thrown back on its own inward experiences, the inquiring Soul finds no countenance in the *natural* order for its sympathetic scruples; no aid in discredited *authority*.

Reconstruction must be mainly empirical, and can never again become systematic. Any future scheme which claims to be comprehensive must be either merely casuistic (an attempt to drain an unfathomable ocean), or historic; and this method, so far as the ultimate sanction of right and wrong is concerned, however instructive, is never frankly conclusive. In fine: (1) the moral agent can never be purely rational, but breathes an atmosphere clouded by passion, emotion, and hypothesis and illumined fitfully by the wandering flashes of the Ideal; and (2) as dealing with the contingent and not with the certain, with the singular not with the typical, he has, if he act at all, to contradict every

precept of philosophic apathy, and merely compromise with probabilities.

Ethics then is mixt or "half-bred" philosophy, and cannot be pursued as a science by the Pure Reason. And this, not only because it is based on certain hypotheses, and these in fact if not in name religious assumptions, but also because it is concerned with the application of Law to individual cases;[1] on that best but peculiar kind of Law, which, though it is regarded as supreme, as 'categorical imperative,' is yet our own creation; depends entirely on our own efforts, for, unlike an edict of Nature or Science which precedes and constrains, it awaits our recognition and our endeavour, before it can come into being. It wins respect and allegiance, like Mill's Deity, by its pathetic weakness. Now it is more than doubtful if the Pure Reason can afford to recognise the Individual,[2] and Ethics (save as the very meagrest and emptiest list of general principles) deals with nothing else. Every individual, as such, is unique. Every ethical situation indeed can be brought nominally under a known law, but the larger half remains outside rebelliously and forms an exception; and it is for this reason that, while in modern life moral relations have multiplied an alarming degree of complexity, and the solving of moral problems has increased in difficulty,—the general equipment of undoubted maxims is so scanty and impoverished, that it may with safety be said that this domain has received no new complement for two thousand years. And this is clear from the most superficial study of modern Moralists; for example, Kant's famous maxim is clearly implicit in every ancient writer; and besides wavers between a truism and an untruth; for from the point of view of Moral *Law*, it is superfluous advice; from the point of view of the *individual* (who is always unique and exceptional) it is as certainly wrong.

[1] Where the law is subordinated to the individual interest—the reverse of the Natural Realm.

[2] All Science proceeds by eliminating the special and the characteristic, and subsumes what seems like exception or spontaneity under some higher or more general law.

§ 3. It would be calamitous, however, if the foundation of Ethics and its practical application ceased to be studied by 'pure' philosophers. In ancient times, when the pursuit of wisdom was practical, and implied adherence to a definite rule of life (somewhat after the fashion of a monastic order in the Middle Ages), there was a constant temptation to the student to revert to theology, either popular or esoteric, for sanctions which abstract principles of the Unity of Being, or the sympathy of all Creatures, could not supply. Philosophy never existed then, as an impartial search after Truth,—it was always in some sense a pursuit of personal Happiness. Each School received a "fast dye" from the temperament of its founder, and the most fertile epoch revived inspiration from an exemplary life, and not from a coherent body of dogma. Personal bias and instinctive sympathy or repulsion decided the young adept in his choice—Plotinus, in his *τοῦτον ἐζήτουν*, after his first lecture from Ammonius Saccas, lays stress upon the fulness of definition already in the mind of the inquirer. To-day such universal or practical functions in the guidance of youth have been undertaken or usurped by the State (in a more exacting sense of its responsibility), or by a Church, whose theology is not in the strict sense a Science, while its practical usefulness would always remain independent of its doctrinal postulates. But it will appear the consistent duty of a Critical Philosophy to examine, to question, and to confirm from its own realm of experience, the general principles which we accept *traditionally*, on authority, or *instinctively*, from some dim notion of *noblesse oblige*, or from some correspondence in sympathy between our heart and an actual School or teacher (as in Plotinus' case), or indeed *emotionally*, as in the case of most active reformers of Society:—who in all time have acted so far in advance of any rational justification that like Plato's sage or lover, they have been mostly called insane. All Ethics must in the end depend upon the inward *motive*, and the ulterior *sanction*;[1] critical philosophy is scarcely

[1] This will remind us of a parallel in the theological field, of the new Ritschlian

fitted to provide the one, or to discover the latter. The history of Ethics will show us how much fuller and richer in content is the half-conscious moral life of the citizen or the parent, since the dawn of history, than the speculation, which sets out to explain, or professes to guide it. How vague, how meagre, are early Greek ethics! how infinitely poorer and more fragmentary and disjointed than the actual life of any individual, taken at random from the cities of Ionia, where, as human nature is at bottom unchanging, we might reasonably expect to find the same types as in the moral or social world of to-day. Even in the more barbaric times or regions, we wonder not so much at the flickering incoherence of savage life, confronted with the dangers of Nature and the problems of existence, but at its steadfast hold on certain definite laws of conduct, and its noble devotion, at all costs and hazards, to this convention. The philosophical expression or explanation of morality has always lagged behind the fulness of the realised life. Morality concerned with the Good which *is not* yet, but *may be*, through our endeavour, dwells in a chiaroscuro realm of Faith and Instinct; where that clear light never penetrates that is wont to display in unmistakable outlines the realm of Truth or of Power, of mathematical and physical law. Into these, antique and somehow pre-existent to our thought, we enter only to obey, or control by obeying. But in the domain of ethics, we create the law; we realise, or we condemn to nothingness, by our inaction or our neglect. We are amazed by the feebleness of its sanction or its authority. We find it strange that Kant, in an exoteric expression of naive wonder, should confuse it with the might of Nature's unalterable sequences. Heroism is irreducible to terms of Reason. The limits of omnipotence seemed to J. S. Mill to constitute the strongest claim on the efforts and the co-operation of good men; the heroic soul is conscious of the same attraction in the field of ethics. Its decision is a bold

emphasis on the First Cause and Final Purpose of the World,—both alike hidden from the Speculative Reason.

wager in the face of probabilities; and it has been well said that to be *moral* involves a more exacting or more childlike faith than to be *religious*.

§ 4. The Ethical philosopher when he does more than arrange and tabulate the moral virtues, finds himself compelled to preach or to be mute. At each sentence or maxim, resting on the precarious base of a vast hypothesis, of a "moral purpose in the universe, to which I am bound by allegiance,"—he dreads the Sophist in his audience and expects those eternal questions, How do you know? and why am I obliged to follow? which await all moral dogmatism, and can never receive a valid answer from theoretical Reason alone. It is for this cause that all thinkers, when engaged in studying the *motive*, and the *Sanction* of right action, either lapse into that mystical language which is a sure sign of the default of clear thought, or under cover of a system of Egoism or Utilitarianism insidiously secrete, as part of the stock-in-trade, those principles of disinterestedness or public service, which we blush to examine (as part I had almost said of our private physical equipment), but for which we find it impossible to account. This has been the fate of all English and Scotch Moralism. The result does credit to the heart, but perhaps neither to the candour or the acumen of the Briton. Abroad, a feminine and sentimental appeal to "unphilosophical" emotions characterises French ethics, wherever it has been able to penetrate to really ultimate problems; whilst pantheistic Germany seeks to found upon a mystical Monism a definite duty for the individual, whose separate existence, though the only immediate datum of experience, it treats as illusory. It makes no kind of difference whether this tendency is religious, as in Fichte's devout and latest writings, or definitely anti-religious, as in Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, and Haeckel.[1]

[1] Andrew Seth, preface to *Man's Place in the Cosmos* (pp. vi and vii). "Humanism as opposed to Naturalism" (as the aim of the volume) "might be described as Ethicism, in opposition to a too narrow Intellectualism. Man as rational, and in virtue of self-conscious reason, the free shaper of his own destiny,—furnishes us, I contend, with our only indefeasible standard of value, and our clearest light as to the nature of the Divine. He does what Science, occupied only with the laws of events, and speculative Metaphysics, when it

The dominant note in these followers of Spinoza is the call to abandon the present real in favour of a metaphysical phantom, which to the man of average sense seems to possess none of the qualities usually associated with the idea of True Being. The mystical goal may be either the Divine Life or Humanity, in its present condition, or in its future destiny,—but in either case the sacrifice of the known for the unknown is demanded; and thus the development of ethical thought, like all scientific thought to-day, follows the mystical path, and founds itself on an assumption of Unity, for which experience empiricism must ever desiderate even probable arguments;—on a denial of individual worth, which however deceptive, is the sole certainty of our consciousness. The whole question of ethics needs to be restated. In terms of Idealism? Certainly, in no other way can we escape mere fragmentary pieces of good business-advice. But of an Idealism, which refuses to consider the world, whether as fact or design, except as subordinate to the consciousness. "What!" it may be urged, "revert to the assumptions of an 'anthropocentric' vanity?" I answer, they will be found to be less exacting by pure Reason than those of Monism, debased into sentimental altruism. And, what is even more important (for we are dealing with a doubtful department, an "offshoot" of philosophy), they alone can satisfy the moral consciousness and the practical needs of life.

§ 5. Most of the problems which disquiet reflection

surrenders itself to the exclusive guidance of the Intellect, alike find unintelligible, and are forced to pronounce impossible—he *acts*."

Again: "Inexplicable in a sense as man's personal agency is—nay, the *one* perpetual miracle,—it is nevertheless our surest datum, and our only clue to the mystery of existence."

For the precisely opposite view, consult the veteran Haeckel (*The Riddle of the Universe*). "The Monism of the Cosmos which we establish on the clear law of Substance,—proclaiming the absolute dominion of the great eternal iron laws throughout the Universe. It thus shatters at the same time the three central dogmas of the Dualistic Philosophy—the Personality of God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Freedom of the Will. Upon the vast field of ruin rises, majestic and brilliant, the new Sun of our Realistic Monism, which reveals to us the wonderful temple of Nature in all its beauty. For the sincere cult of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful (which is the heart of our new monistic Religion)—we find ample compensation for the anthropistic ideals of God, freedom, and immortality, which we have lost."

have to be tacitly abandoned or considered as solved before the simplest point in ethics can be discussed. Philosophy regards life from an exactly opposite position to common sense; it surveys it as if from the other end of the telescope; the ordinary and familiar becomes the most abstruse of mysteries, the exceptional and startling shrink into the simplest and most easily explained. But Ethics being most akin to the common sense of practical men, has to assume quite as much, and is equally unable to explain its hypotheses,—unless it appeals to the ambiguous and oracular decisions of Logic or Metaphysic. There are many rival schools in the present day: those who deny that Ethics can be studied apart from Metaphysical presupposition; those who pronounce Ethics entirely independent; and those who maintain that the Metaphysical realm can only be entered through the Ethical, and to complete the possible alliances, those who believe the key lies in the investigation of Nature. Into the merits of their controversy it is not my intention to enter. I only desire to point out that there is an almost universal agreement that moral studies are scarcely complete in themselves, though the precise degree of their dependence is a subject of much discussion. It is doubtful if in any domain of wisdom these hypotheses receive final and adequate proof. In the field of ethics no such attempt is made; latent in every assertion or counsel or maxim they are accepted as indispensable; and, nearest to Common Thought just in this department, Philosophy is here also much beholden to ordinary consciousness for certain necessary 'forms' of belief, which are the atmosphere enfolding every moral action. Not without reason in intellectual Greece, did ethical inquiry come late and reluctantly to birth; while in China it never advanced beyond the childhood of detached maxims of utility, and vaguely authoritative gnomes;—and to complete the metaphor, in India, never young, morals have never quitted the single and servile precept of absolute Quietism.

§ 6. But to return to the assumption of Occidental

Ethics. We are constantly reminded by the contrast of other and more ancient systems of one cardinal assumption, which will be found to underlie all Western Thought. The West European mind—the fruit of the conjunction of Hellenism and Judaism under the long tutelage of Rome—entertains a prejudice (which, as quite beyond rational proof, I can only call instinctive) in favour of action, striving, conflict, and social endeavour for a common good.

But the civilised races, who form as Christendom a united whole against Barbarism, and can sink their differences and deny their religious scepticism in face of a general peril, are in a minority; they compose but one-third of the whole human family.[1] And the belief in the

[1] *Letters from John Chinaman* (1901). "Our civilisation is the oldest in the world. It does not follow that it is the best; but neither, I submit, does it follow that it is the worst. Such antiquity is, at any rate, a proof that our institutions have presented to us a stability for which we search in vain among the nations of Europe. Not only is our civilisation stable—it also embodies, as we think, a moral order; while in yours we detect only an economic chaos. . . . We measure the degree of civilisation, not by accumulation of the means of living, but by the character and nature of the life lived. Where there are no humane and stable relations, no reverence for the past, no respect even for the present, but only a cupidinous ravishment of the future—there we think there is no true Society. . . . Admitting that we are not what you call a progressive people, we yet perceive that progress may be bought too dear."

After enumerating the natural and human details which to the Chinese seem to bring highest moments of emotion in life,—"A rose in a moonlit garden, the shadow of trees on the turf . . . the pathos of life and death, the long embrace, the hand stretched out in vain, the moment that glides forever away with its freight of music and light, into the shadow and mist of the haunted past, all that we have, all that eludes, the bird on the wing, a perfume escapes on the gale—to all these things we are trained to respond, and the response is what is called Literature. This we have; this you cannot give us; but this you may so easily take away.

"Amid the roar of looms it cannot be heard; it cannot be seen in the smoke of factories; it is hidden by the wear and the whirl of Western life. And when I look at your business men, the men whom you most admire, when I see them day after day, year after year, toiling in the mill of their forced and undelighted labours; when I see them importing the anxieties of the day into their scant and grudging leisure, and wearing themselves out less by toil than by carking and illiberal cares;—I reflect (I confess, with satisfaction) on the simpler routine of our ancient industry, and prize above your new and dangerous routes, the beaten track so familiar to our accustomed feet, that we have time even while we pace it, to turn our gaze up to the eternal stars."

Here once more is the ideal of the East held up for our guidance by a disillusioned Occidental, who impersonates a Chinese proselytiser or at least apologist while using the poetry of Maeterlinck and the romantic pathos of Parker. In the eighteenth century, China seemed to political reformers in Europe (and with much truth) to unite the 'res olim dissociabiles, Imperium et Libertas,' in a constitution which was frankly patriarchal, and a social uniformity which knew no class distinctions. To the Idealist of the nineteenth century and still more to the Pessimist, the

value of the progressive life as the highest is denied by the rest; just as the dignity of manual labour, first taught by the mediæval monks, is peculiar to us. With very imperfect historical data the philosophers in the years succeeding the French Revolution, thinking that somehow they had arrived at the culminating epoch of our race, hurriedly set forth the comparative table of human records; and, on the obsolete computation of four thousand years before our era, founded a scheme of the Progress of Reason, and placed their own time at the dawning of the last and happiest period. No one is so audacious to-day as to prophesy the unerring fulfilment of man's hopes, or the approaching realisation of an earthly paradise. We are aware of the infinite spaces of history in the past; we confront, in the future, some accidental comet which will whirl into fiery oblivion the petty systems and commotions of our Planet; and nearer at hand, we recognise a serious menace to our Western ideals in those teeming multitudes, who seem impervious to their influence. Whatever is written about ethics or the human destiny must be tempered by this wholesome reflection: that we are in a minority, and that our view of the world is not certain to triumph. And bound up in this view lies our earliest assumption: that the life of action in and for society is the highest, just because it is the only one possible for all; for the final standard must be within the reach of every one. But it needs but a superficial knowledge to discover how exceptional we are in this sober emphasis on ordinary duties. Nowhere but in West Europe and truest and profoundest lessons in philosophy were to be learnt at the feet of the Pundit of India, in the ascetic renunciation which marks both Brahmanism and the system of Gautama. Even at the close of the century, virtue and contentment and a magical authority over natural forces are fitter to live in the single unexplored region of the earth; in Tibet, whither have fled at the visions of Fortunate Isles, Hyperboreans, and 'blameless Ethiopians.' But this persistent attempt to discover perfection in some almost inaccessible fastness, either of region or of philosophy, is a sign of protest against the mechanical complications and the anxious uneasiness of our Western life. Nietzsche, Maxim Gorki, and Mr. Taylor (*Problem of Conduct*), may be combined as having from another point of view condemned the fundamental axioms of our Western ideas of progress and civilisation. (For Gorki, on whom has fallen the mantle and a double portion of Nietzsche's rebellious spirit, cf. Dr. Dillon in *Contemporary Review*, February 1902.)

its offshoot America is goodness and moral worth the criterion; elsewhere knowledge and supposed spiritual gifts, or brute courage, constitute an unquestioned primacy; and we may ask whether the undoubted survival of aristocratic modes of thought and popular confidence in familiar names, is not due to this trustfulness in the power of the motto 'Noblesse oblige.' Knowledge, ever since Socrates' fatally ambiguous use of *φρόνησις*, has elsewhere become identified with the Highest Morality; and a privileged caste has been set apart with the approbation of the mob, not for a disinterested guidance of ordinary affairs (which we expect and receive from a Western aristocracy) but for an idle or contemptuous contemplation of their own perfection and the passing show of a universe which has no meaning, and of the vain efforts of others to reach the goal of tranquillity. The Yogi or Sanyasi is respected by the people, not because he helps but because he despises them. Now our Western system is in the true sense open to all; for it alone can provide a sanction for the humblest endeavour, and give a meaning and attach a value to the simplest act. Here there is no false aristocracy (either of caste or cleverness), no doctrine of reserve; and in the final issue, our philosophies and our religions stand or fall by the verdict of the vulgar.

§ 7. But in face of this dissent among older civilisations it is worth while to inquire whence comes this firm conviction as to the value of the Moral Life. It is certainly not derived from a contemplation of Nature.

> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life.

Morality exactly reverses this; for Duty before demanding the self-surrender of an individual to the Common Good, must assure and convince him, however dimly, of his own dignity and worth. In spite of an abortive attempt to unite the physical and the moral realm in evolutionary Ethics, it is sufficient here to assert as obvious that 'Nature' gives no such sanction, provides no such example. At a certain point natural philosophers, justly alarmed for the interests of morality, overstep the

inductive method, refuse to be guided by fact, and take refuge from a destructive scepticism in emotional appeal. The two realms 'idly confront' one another, as did Plato's ideal and real worlds; and an impassable gulf stretches between them, which no introduction of sentiment into physics, or mechanism into morals can ever bridge.[1] Ethics cannot be studied (as Stoics studied theology) as a mere episode to physics, as a subordinate department in a larger survey. The student of physics must perforce abandon in the natural world for a moment that 'anthropocentric' and prepossessed attitude, but he will resume it again as a necessary condition of his practical life. Only because each man believes he is an end in himself, can he treat others as if they likewise were ends in themselves, and not things or chattels, but persons. This may be, like its complementary postulate of Freedom, like the existence of the material world, an illusion; but it is one from which we cannot escape, and which is implied in our most trivial act. Anarchism and Extreme Socialism wade to the Millennium through the murder of the Superfluous, whether monarch or infant weakling. As we see the world outside only in terms of ourselves; as we have no conception of what it is in itself, or how it would appear to beings with other senses; as we have to be satisfied with this relativity of all Truth; so in the field of practice; let us be content to accept this belief in the value and equality of the individual person as the final foundation of our conduct; hypothesis indeed, yet unassailable, for without it Ethics is impossible.

§ 8. We must presume then that the life of striving, of conscious advance and progress has some ulterior sanction, some as yet hidden significance; that to be merged in contemplation of the Eternal order is an unprofitable counsel of despair; that the 'single life,' with its pressing and immediate duties, has some import; and that the social fabric is maintained by recognising and conciliating individual rights, that social fabric, which can only be

[1] Notice the confusion in Professor Huxley's mind in his strangely illogical essay on Evolution and Ethics.

termed an end in itself because it exists only for persons. But here is a still deeper problem. Are we entitled to speak of a person at all? meaning thereby a seat and centre of activity, free and spontaneous, at least in the final decision of its tribunal introducing from time to time a new element, a new and incalculable force into the tangled but continuous and unbroken skein of natural causes? This is without question the greatest problem of our time; and yet from the point of view of ethics, it has a merely academic interest. Whether, as Lotze suggests, a leading monad bears sway as some limited but responsible monarch among lesser centres of consciousness; whether the Soul be undiscoverable to closest scrutiny, and our sense of permanent identity a vexatious hallucination; whether the old traditional dualism of Spirit and body must be modified or retained;—all this can be of account only in the theoretic domain of psychologic Ethics; it cannot enter, as a perplexing problem, the practical region. We still use the old language of blame and praise, of moral responsibility, of conscience, and of duty; and we are obliged to acknowledge that when questions remain balanced by equal arguments, we are at liberty to take the line of greatest attraction in making our choice. It is a feat of sheer legerdemain when a moral appeal is tacked on inconsistently to some disproof of free-will. We have to reckon with the abiding sense of the community; and in apportioning our justice in the public courts, or over the private conscience, we start from the hypothesis of this stable point at least,—the reality of the self, and the persistence of the ego, amid apparent change. We need not be ashamed, especially in this doubtful province of philosophy, of seeming to shirk ultimate problems. Ethics is the realm of Faith; and as time goes on, we seem to increase rather than diminish the indispensable articles of our creed;—but the additional weight is no argument for surrendering one of them, for they grow consistent in their very paradox.

§ 9. The weight of hypothesis which the Ethical agent

has to carry in the simplest moral act may be now definitely described under the following heads. He must assume (1) that the world has a meaning or is capable of bearing one, and this through his personal efforts; (2) that these efforts are to some extent voluntary, spontaneous, and effective, and that indifference is a shirking of responsibility; (3) that social or racial progress is a fitting object for dutiful striving in co-operation, but that this cause can only be advanced by recognising the unique value and permanent import of the *individual* as opposed to any abstraction called the *type*; (4) that from this point of view and from no other (whether mental, racial, or physical), men are equal, on the side of moral personality; (5) that it is a mere poetic allegory (and perhaps not wholly a harmless one) to speak of the progress or education of the Human Race, since to bear a real meaning, there must be in the subject a continuity of conscious experience; (6) that as the ultimate stimulus in Ethics is an inspiriting sense of freedom to do good, and as the supreme motive will always be, sense of loyalty to a cause not yet won,—the result of his action to the single-minded devotee will be Happiness; (7) finally, that as the aim of all conscious effort must be satisfaction felt by some one, and not the fulfilment or (if I may be allowed the paradox) the selfish gratification of some impersonal Law,[1] Happiness must be the goal, and Duty (or the recognition of Law) but a means to this end.

The sole ultimate test of the truth of a system, of its value, or its endurance, is and always must be the warmth and sympathetic acceptance of the conscious personality, who realises by his efforts an otherwise idle or empty Ideal. Altruism is accepted as a philosophical norm of conduct, not because it is rationally justifiable (which perhaps it is not), but because in experience it excites the highest feelings of satisfaction and joy, and "brings a man

[1] "In what way," asks William James in his *Will to Believe* (p. 196), "is this fact of wrongness made more acceptable or intelligible when we imagine it to consist rather in the laceration of an *a priori* ideal order than in the disappointment of a living God?"

peace at the last." "Love" is the religious term accepted, as implying the passing away of timorous or calculating obedience to a law, as external restraint is the dictate of an inconsiderate and irresponsible Superior. It would be difficult to disprove that we have a perfect right to evade such a decree, like physical laws, if we can. "Love" secures the peculiar and inward approbation of the Law, as in some measure connected with our own interests; and this approbation is the ultimate fact of interest and importance in Morals. This connection is almost invariably a pure matter of Faith; but it is absolutely needful to postulate it, as I cannot believe that lasting approbation—sufficient, at least, to induce practice—can ever be bestowed upon that which in the end disregards the private and eternal interest of the approver.

II

§ 10. If we were to divide man's life somewhat roughly into its passive and active halves, we might call the former Ethics, the latter Politics. No casual student of the history of moralising can fail to see that the negative side is the more prominent;—the extent of the subordination of the part to the whole, of the forgiveness and forbearance due to an erring brother; or the precise limits which a sense of uniform and impartial justice places on the caprice or the desires of the individual. Scanty are the positive maxims either in antiquity or more modern times; and if a wide and effective theory of life has ever taken place among philosophic systems, it will generally be found to owe little to philosophy, much to some supposed Divine legislation, which insisting on the virtues of docile obedience and Faith, permits no individual scrutiny or casuistry, and perhaps for this very reason claims and obtains a peculiar reverence in the strife of perplexed disputants. If we consider what are the points worth recording in the Hellenic systems, or the most striking features in the life of their founders, we shall see how

small was the encouragement or explanation given to active life in Society, either by precept or example. At a very early period their reflection had convinced them that ordinary civic duties were incompatible with the cultivation of the (supposed) highest gifts of man's nature. The "common good," naively understood, even in the earliest times, to be the end at which all must aim, is never reconciled to the single interest. A gulf separates the two worlds, the starry heavens of Anaxagoras, the world-order of Diogenes the *κοσμοπολίτης*, from that precise part of the brotherhood of man in which their lot had been cast. For fellows they looked about for some worthier associates; the undiscovered sage; or the initiates of a sect or a school; or the Divine thought, that universal and impersonal Reason (of which both God and men partook); or the forces of Nature, as the river that said "Hail Pythagoras!"—in that despairing universalism which degraded man to an exact equality with the other animals;—not only in the Italian schools of "totem and taboo," but in the cold intellectualism of the Academy, or in the credulous scepticism of a Celsus. Plato makes the official and public duties an unpleasing though needful deviation from the routine of that speculative meditation which might so soon degenerate into mystical reverie. The reward for this distasteful mixing in affairs was an undisturbed leisure for tasks which if not pure Mathematics, were astonishingly vague, and must have been something between Euclid and a Rosary. Cicero, his constant imitator, with a significant innovation, places the recompense of Scipio's unselfish patriotism in a home beyond the stars, where he can watch and comprehend the mechanism of the world. Aristotle's interest, like Renan's in public matters, is that of the Student, not the Reformer; and the quietistic tendencies of the later Schools are too well known to need special mention here; no one (it is to be hoped) being misled by the Stoics' parrot-like iteration (as a mere academic commonplace) *πολιτεύσεσθαι τὸν σοφόν*. Where a positive influence is exerted, it is due to character and personality. Pythagoras, though anchoritic

in his tendencies, founds a monastic brotherhood, and secretly guides the politics of the Italian commonwealths. Socrates gives a certain positive content to this empty though luminous disc of philosophic morality; Epicurus overcomes the gross or selfish axioms of his creed in the simplicity of his life and the warmth of his friendship.

§ 11. The common conviction of mankind (when not too highly civilised) is in favour of social life, with its good-natured "give and take"; but ancient inquirers who set out to explore the reasons for this conviction were so far from discovering them that they end by denying. Aristotle, casting into the mould of a technical definition this belief (shall we call it innate presupposition?) in man as *ζῶον πολιτικόν*, is yet much more enamoured of the peculiar differentia which makes man, above all things, *ζῶον θεωρητικόν*. Whether we are to believe the perpetual legends of the intercourse of Greek leaders with a foreign or Oriental influence—with Egyptian Priests at Naucratis, Memphis and Meroe, with Magi, Scythians or Gymnosophists—it is perfectly clear that Greek ethical study led from the outset far away from civil life and the healthy turmoil and democratic play of equal forces; that the peculiar temper, inculcated on the proficient, was one of calm and resignation, either defiant and paradoxic, as among Cynics and certain of the Stoics, or that pure negative pessimism, which found its last word in the *ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου* of the Roman period. Even in the Schools which accepted as "goods" the friendliness and good word of fellow-citizens and the ample equipment of a comfortable life, which pursued some definite end not only of vague and ascetic moral culture, but some positive branch of study—even in these the ideal sage was rather the member of an invisible kingdom of Reason than an interested or responsible member of a corporation. No subjects were more frequently discussed than whether the wise man should marry, bring up children, take part in political life; and this very fact shows that reflection could not (even among a wholesome people like the Greeks) give a sufficient reason for the common behaviour

and conviction of ordinary men; and that starting from an impulse to discover and confirm, it only succeeded in undermining every possible sanction altogether. What accounts for this peculiar phenomenon? One fact there is without doubt:—the Greek passion for Oneness—as noticeable in their theoretic or ideal aspirations, as their childlike delight in multiplicity and variegation in practical life. A single transmutable yet identical Substance (or φύσις) in the world; an Idea, which binds into a stable faggot the feeble manifold of the particular instance, and this again subsumed under a more comprehensive idea until at last Unity is reached; a rigid crystalline globe, in which not only the individual life becomes illusion, but even the familiar experience of motion and of change; a kingdom of Νοητά, which is almost one with the individual thinking spirit as ὀρθός λόγος, φρόνησις, and which is reached first by divesting the object thought, of all garments belonging to its position in time and space, of all specific differentiæ or idiosyncrasies, until the clear but attenuated outline of its inner essence comes to view; next, by a parallel process of de-qualification in the subject, wherein the thinking mind abandons, so as to attain truth, the cold dualism of knowledge for the warm glow of immediate union, or at least of inter-penetration:—such are the forms of this Hellenic Monism. Epicurus alone, nearest to common life and thought in spite of his pretentious style,[1] is the sole representative who absolutely and of set purpose discards all pretence to Unity, to give free play to the individual caprice. As he pertinently remarks, "It would be a slight service to set free the mind from terror of divine forces, to fetter it anew in a grosser servitude to inexorable physical Law. For you may have hopes of conciliating the one, but the other you cannot escape."

§ 12. And we must also observe that owing to the desire for a comprehensive but vague unity[2] either of Law,

[1] For the σαφής of Diogenes Laertius must be ironical.

[2] To a Soul possessed of this craving for unity, rest is impossible until the final goal is reached. The State, the Fatherland, is but a phase, and gives way to a Κοσμόπολις or to Nature. The eighteenth century is much to blame; one of

or Force, or Reason, the Greek ethical student threw himself into the arms of Nature, and refused to recognise that in history alone can man find himself mirrored. Man's place in the great commonwealth of natural order, his peculiar function and differentia—this was the object of their search. Now the essence of Nature (as conceived by the Greeks) is to be unchanging through change, to exhibit no conscious progress towards a goal, to be indifferent to historical development. The desire of the Schools is not to found an ethics of casuistry to help the doubting in critical circumstance, but to discover a "typical" excellence or perfection, towards which all who are capable should strive. Reason unfalteringly proclaimed that the exercise and the discipline of her own powers was alone a suitable task ; and the rarefied and shadowy form of the abnegating Sage hovers mournfully over the entire period, as the supreme Παράδειγμα for imitation, though they allowed with regrets that it had never been realised. Gazing like Narcissus into the vague mysteries of a physical or spiritual universe, and seeing therein a faint semblance of themselves (though lacking all realness or positive content), pining for this image, perversely shunning the companionship of grosser mortals, they ended by taking the "salto mortale" into the chilly waters, finding alas! unlike Hylas, no Naiads beneath the surface to welcome them. I have elsewhere pointed out[1] the peculiar momentousness of the succession of the Judæo-Christian ideal of life to the Classical. On this modern Europe has founded her principles and her institutions, with her signal and vigorous hold on social life, on present duties, on the duty and the happiness of effort in whatever direction. Many before Nietzsche (who cannot be styled an original thinker) have complained

its children, Michelet, perhaps sunk deepest in superstitious veneration for abstract norms, writes in his book (*Nos Fils*, Introd. xii) : "Il faut que le jeune âme ait un substantiel aliment. Il y faut une chose vivante. Quelle chose? La Patrie, son âme, son histoire, La tradition nationale, La Nature, Universelle Patrie. Voilà une nourriture qui réjouira remplira le cœur de l'enfant." One of the most hopeful features of the new century is the general discredit that has come over these mischievous assurances of a vague and sentimental Realism.

[1] *School of Plato*, Book iii. "Judaism."

of the *feminine* character of Christian morality. The virtues seem at first sight all negative and ascetic; passivity is the end or τέλος in the religious life of grace, and in daily patient intercourse with a scoffing and unbelieving world. The hermit-life rather than the cenobitic was the higher ideal of the first three centuries. But hardly suspected under bishops and clergy, a busy but silent transformation of a decadent age was proceeding; and may we not ask if Greek and Indian examples of fortitude, constancy, and retirement were not largely influential? With the earliest promise of probable power in the secular sphere, with the conviction of the delay in the Second Advent, the ideal insensibly changes. Throughout the Middle Ages (though the devout mystic may possibly regret the degeneracy) we may trace the new value and ennoblement of ordinary duties and of business, the consecration of matter and of effort. While still recognising a hierarchy of ideals, the Church did not deny the worth of the lower; while believing that humble Faith could be transcended in knowledge or lost in the actual Vision, she still paid honour to simple and ignorant goodness. Now this strenuous interference in active life and government (sometimes deprecated by the secular spirit, always regretted by the devotional) is due to a fundamental article in the new creed, "that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." It contradicts the Realism which rendered nugatory much of Greek thought and much of mediæval rationalism. A new form of teleology (not unlike the Socratic) had held the world of Nature to be for man's use, his trial, discipline, and development. The entire emphasis is removed from this indifferent background of our efforts to the fortunes of the individual Soul, or the Divine edicts concerning it. At first, interest is mainly concerned with a transcendental doctrine of pre-natal sin and its consequence, and a Divine fiat of mercy or of reprobation. It soon centres round the prosperity of a visible state, with sure foundations, and a goal well within view. Instead of the 'cosmic emotion' of Greece in face of the marvel of the General

Order, arises a belief in the progress of a tangible kingdom, ruled by an absent head through an inspired vicegerent. This thought inspired most of the self-devotion of those ages, for if you preach Unity you will not get it, and the average man will only work loyally for a cause to which he knows himself to be superior. The clue to the meaning of man and a justification of his efforts here, is found not in *Nature*, but in *history*. Now Judaism and Christianity are the only two religions in which the *historical* element predominates over the *transcendental* and the dogmatic; and in consequence the only ones in which the individual finds a significance and a place, and an assurance of his abiding value.[1]

§ 13. In this brief survey of ethical thought down to the opening promises of modern philosophy, we have seen how the independent study of ethics has tended to throw back the student on himself, alienate him from the common life, the world of society or particulars, and concentrate his attention on a typical and in effect unattainable perfection, derived from an idealistic view of the Universe; sometimes gladdening his solitariness with hopes of higher companionship, but always encouraging him to wait in passive expectancy the coming of heavenly visitants. Meantime, the unreflecting or the docile, have been content to go about their ordinary duties, secure in certain axioms (unexamined though they be), derived from experience of life, from tradition, from public opinion, or from early training, based on a revelation which they believed Divine. The Feud of the vulgar with philosophy was at least justified so far as they saw in these studies a pretext for abstention, and for an idleness that was often dissolute and indecent; which shocked and derided rather than confirmed those common prejudices, emotions,

[1] Deussen, writing on Indian Philosophy, has remarked: "As surely as the Will and not the Intellect is the centre of a man's nature, so surely must the pre-eminence be assigned to Christianity, in that its demand for a renewal of the Will is peculiarly vital and essential. But as certainly as man is not mere Will but Intellect besides, so certainly will that Christian renewal of the Will reveal itself on the other side as a renewal of knowledge, just as the Upanishads teach." Thus in the New Testament and the Sacred Books of the East, "these two noblest products of the religious consciousness of mankind," he reconciles *θεωρία* and *πρᾶξις*, and Aquinas and Duns Scotus.

and sentiments, upon which was based even the most rudimentary of Greek commonwealths. The union of *Ethics* (as the *negative* side) with *Politics* (as the art of practical life in Society) was the result of various forces at work in the early centuries of our era. The apparent quiescence of early Christian Society was but a period of feigning of idleness, a reserving of energy, or a new storing of power. The union of the two spheres of the Secular and the Sacred under a single authority brought in for a time a conciliation of interests, the common good and the unit's welfare. The Roman Church might elevate the contemplative virtues, following Aristotle, as a counsel of perfection; but it never neglected to guide, indeed to interfere with life in its minutest detail.[1] But with the division of provinces in the growing spirit of independence—a division which we unhesitatingly assert to be a final, conclusive, and salutary conquest of the human mind—came a new attempt to discover an independent (naturalistic or egoistic) basis of moral conduct; and to free from an irksome villeinage, not merely science, but conduct. Beginning once more *in vacuo*, the early attempts at systematising moral behaviour astonish us by their crudeness, their inferiority to current practice, their niggard calculation of self-interest, their ignorance of human nature. These philosophers, weighted (like Huxley in more modern times) with the doctrine of Original Sin, could conceive of no good in human nature. Each man was a "child of wrath"; a grasping yet pusillanimous savage, whose quarrelsomeness threatened the race with extinction, had not a covenant of fear, to impose bounds on this fatal liberty, been framed in some mythical age. Self-interest could be the sole motive for action; and government, religion, and the control of public opinion, were but outward restraints, necessary indeed to the welfare of the majority called the State, but awakening

[1] Heine (*Religion and Philosophy in Germany*) and most historians of philosophy are extraordinarily at fault in estimating mediæval aims and tendencies. To take Aquinas and Bonaventura as types of the whole age is as great a mistake as to take Huysmans or (on another level) d'Annunzio as specimens of the aspirations of all French or all the Italians.

no sympathetic echo, certainly no loyal devotion, in the heart of the individual. They owed their origin to that defect of human nature (or the universal order) which prevented in the conflict of equal[1] and unyielding interests the attainment of personal happiness in supreme selfishness and irresponsibility. While Law, civil and ecclesiastical, while government, arbitrary or democratic, with the whole machine of social intercourse, pursued the even and unreflecting tenor of their way, and allowed no doubts or sophistries to interfere with the orderliness of civilised society,—the Philosopher, ignorant or careless alike of his own inner psychology or of man's historic development, stood helpless and discouraged when confronted with the simplest moral action. He searches for the spring of action amid the most universal and brutish of our natural instincts (that of self-preservation at all costs). Failing to discover it, he was in the end compelled to call in the aid of an inexplicable and arbitrary moral law imposed by Divine Legislation, whose sanctions (especially after the failure and abandonment of religious persecution) remained ambiguous, or were relegated to the somewhat uncertain sphere of a future life. So impotent were the pretentions of Ethics to independence at that period. It is far from my purpose to refuse to Philosophy an ultimate and honourable alliance with a religious view of the world, but it is mere weakness to take refuge so hurriedly in the Divine.

§ 14. The Greeks, starting with the obvious definition of man as *ζῶον πολιτικόν*, had nevertheless tended to centre interest on the equally unmistakable fact that he was *ζῶον λογικόν*. It was found impossible to reconcile the two domains, and the wise man looked elsewhere for the perfect employment of his highest faculties (*εὐδαιμονία*) than in the narrow duties of domestic and social life. The best of men, the sincerest of philosophers, when at length

[1] The early post-Reformation speculators were very proud of having upset the hierarchical House of Lords, called Mediæval Feudalism. Interest centred on the fiction of pre-social man, "naked and unashamed." Postulating for him a liberty and an equality which they were at no pains to define, they led directly to the horrors of the French Revolution.

invested with a power nominally absolute, was unable to effect any improvement in mankind, or indeed exert any influence on the fabric of Society. The reign of Marcus Aurelius, disastrous to the Romans, was, however, useful to posterity, as warning against excessive hopes in philosophic or scientific moralism to-day, or in the results of academic or idealistic legislation. Whatever the cause, the schism was complete; and philosophy, though it claims to be a practical rule of living, had to leave the real business to the equity and opportunism of Roman administration. In the Christian period, in spite of the *practical* efficacy of the Catholic Church in the sphere of conduct, it must be confessed that in *theory* the significance and value of this world was subordinated to the future kingdom of recompense. The rationalism of the Schoolmen, exerted with startling audacity in the region of Theosophy and the deepest mysteries of the Divine essence, never applied itself to a thoughtful survey of human nature, its springs of action, and capability of perfection, but contented itself with an empty and formal classification of qualities and virtues. Thus, as we have seen, into this unknown region of our own heart the early independent philosophers of modern times penetrated with the burden of original sin on their shoulders, and saw in man—apart from the divine grace (as some still supposed) or the restraining influence of external law, "the interest of the many weak"—nothing but a beast of prey. The Church, rich in acts of mercy, and in striking examples of the highest unselfishness, had nevertheless no theory to account for the more generous emotions (let us hope a fairly large portion of our life) except on the hypothesis of self-interest, the attainment of a deferred annuity or an eternal reward. Practice, here as often in advance of thought (because love and loyalty, the true marks of life, cannot be expressed in terms of thought)—exposed to the notice of the speculator an entire class of behaviour, for which he had no name in his lists but "benevolence"; and yet on this the interest of Society was more and more concentrating. Of the immediate unreflecting pleasure of

an unselfish action, without this deliberate rational calculation of its effects in a transcendental realm, philosophers before Shaftesbury must have had ample experience, but did as a matter of fact fail to understand the significance. And as since that time the Problem of disinterestedness has stood in the forefront of all ethical discussion, it is there that the real puzzle lies, the true difficulty of a rational presentation of ethics.

When the French Revolution, born of the brutish axiom of pure self-interest, suddenly (like modern scientific sentimentalism) called upon its votaries to sacrifice themselves to an abstraction, it could indeed readily count upon a firm loyalty and devotion to principles if no longer to persons. But it could not account for this without paradox, nor explain it without contravening the sacred laws of the "Age of Reason." Reason indeed, as Mr. Kidd has pointed out, would rather seem to summon us from the vain prospect of a terrestrial paradise for some remote race, to the "cultivation of our own garden"—the single remembered adage of Voltaire's *Candide*.

§ 15. The Nineteenth Century, which we can no longer call 'present' or 'our own,' belonging, as it does, to impartial history and criticism, is marked by two somewhat opposite tendencies which closely considered are irreconcilable: (1) the practical benevolence, first issuing in a readjustment of imaginary civic rights, as might be expected from the visionary idealism of the followers of the French Revolution, and now turning to the more useful problem of the substantial betterment of the worker's lot, not only as a matter of compulsory education, or sanitation by means of Act of Parliament, but as a personal and sympathetic familiarity with individuals in the suffering class; (2) the much-eulogised advance in human Science,[1] both in destroying the boundaries of nations and their mutual exclusiveness, in eliminating the marvellous or the unknown (one of the chief sources of hope in our life) not only from this shrunken planet but

1 "Science" (says Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*) "has made modern life cheerful and comfortable."

even from stellar space, and in manifesting the reign of a law and a certainty or a fatalism—which by no stretch of fancy can be called moral or retributive—dominant and supreme in every part of our body or mind, in the lot of nations, in the destiny of the poor. The former makes for *practical* effort, the latter for *quietism* and *abstention.* The one rests on the conviction of the abiding value of the individual, however difficult to explain, justify or define, and the relativity of all else; the other, whether from the side of religious or physical Monism,[1] preaches that complete or implicit mysticism, which denying the individual as an illusion, and glozing over his sufferings in advancing the world-purpose for some inscrutable end, proclaims the tyranny of the triumphant One.[2] The *practical* tendency, clinging fast to religious dogma or at least to that spirit of endeavour which it seems to beget, gives especial attention to the weaker of mankind, and repairing the more obvious unfairness of lot by charity, saves the infirm, and combats Natural Selection at every point. The other, with eyes fixed on the unity of the

[1] And the two species are very hard to distinguish, as may be seen in the vacillations of Stoicism.

[2] It is worth noticing that a protest against this dominion of abstractions to which Europe, freed from arbitrariness of kings and priests, is bidden to bow,—reaches us from a pioneer of anarchy, the opposite of Socialism, in rejecting Realism for the concrete. "Max Stirner" (says the eloquent Vernon Lee) "builds up his system . . . upon the notion that the *Geist*, the intellect that forms conceptions, is a colossal cheat, for ever robbing the individual of its due, and marring life by imaginary obstacles. . . . Against this kingdom of Delusion the human individual—der Einzige—has been since the beginning of time slowly and painfully fighting his way; never attaining to any kind of freedom, but merely exchanging one form of slavery for another, slavery to the Religious delusion for slavery to the Metaphysical delusion, slavery to Divine right for slavery to civil liberty, slavery to dogma, commandment, heaven and hell, for slavery to sentiment, humanity, progress—all equally mere words, conceits, figments, by which the wretched individual has allowed himself to be coerced and martyrised; the wretched Individual who alone is a Reality." We may discount, to be sure, the violence of Stirner, or the Thrasymachean unscrupulousness of Nietzsche; in the somewhat anæmic Europe of to-day, we are not likely to see an outburst of those simpler and barbaric sentiments of rapine. It is not the anarchy of Force but of Quiescence, not Kropotkin but Tolstoi, that is the danger. That the leisured and (presumably) educated classes should look down on politics is perhaps natural but alarming. "Duty in anything but a negative form is incompatible with Happiness."—Before an inalterable and undeviating Evolution (whence and whether we know not), whether of physical power or of a Universe of thought (Wundt, *Ethics*, pp. 178-180), any real effort is superfluous. If we do not bow to the Universal will, we stand outside the course of events, and delude ourselves with the pleasing luxury of defiance (as the Stoic did, for all his pussy-cat resignation).

Universe, or the outward prosperity of a Society, advocates, in its more candid moments, "Social Surgery," and demands to control and appraise the output of human material as much as the amount and value of any other commodity. It does not require the violent language of Anarchy to assure us that the weak individuals who yet form the strong majority will never submit to this. The European mind has been for six hundred years striving to overthrow the Heteronomy of Dogma and Deduction, and find out some more estimable substitute than unquestioning passive obedience—non-resistance in politics, and confidence in a father confessor's guidance in spiritual matters. The individual in the very moment of victory is certainly not going on his travels to discover a new and more exacting master. Around the mediæval objects of popular reverence, the Sovereign, the Emperor, the Director, there hovered all the radiance of Divine sanction. Law was personified, and (as Epicurus saw) a person is adaptable, and may be mollified or exchanged.[1] The popular suffrage was won by the appeal to democratic instinct, which deluded the commonalty into willing obedience even in the case of the French soldier of the Revolution, because the highest offices in Church and State, nay the Empire itself, were open to all.[2] But even the cleverness and the imagination of Comte cannot invest the Race, Humanity, with any of this lost charm. As a stimulant to action it is ineffective; as a substitute for religious feeling it is absurd.

§ 16. It is above all necessary to remember that any ethical system must be founded upon consideration for the individual. All the modern movements bound up in the general terms, Trades Unionism and Socialistic Legislation, are (so far as they are demanded by the working classes) frankly egoistic; recognising co-operation as

[1] Thus Despotism has always found a corrective in assassination, and is more sensitive than any other form of government to public opinion, if it once finds expression.

[2] So are political offices to-day, in the Democratic regimen which defeats and denies itself. The only cure for the complementary evils of professional statesmen and pessimistic abstention is a hard-working and gratuitous aristocracy.

essential, but subordinate to the attainment of individual desires, and as a means not as an end. Calvinism which enslaved the will to a divine and inscrutable edict, out of the plane of human reason and justice, was repelled with no less indignation by the new movement than the doctrine of passive obedience to a luxurious king's caprice. However decorated by appeals to abstract Right and Justice, the writings of the Labour leaders aim clearly at one thing—the equal division of external goods, to which, by the way, the Greek schools subsequent to Aristotle united to deny the title good altogether. Disappointed alike with the failure of Machinery and the Franchise to increase the general distribution of comforts, and to put an end to the subservience of the million to the luxury of a few, they entertain a justifiable ambition; but it is difficult to impart ethical notions into this challenge, except those of a candid and thorough-going Eudæmonism.[1] Universal Eudæmonism indeed, as Wundt would call it, but only so because in Utilitarianism alone is there secure fruition of personal happiness. The prospect of the extinction of competition in European Society cannot be seriously regarded. The voluntary abandonment of self-determination may take place under stress of national circumstances (the case of France under Napoleon III. will recur)—or of individual privation. Something of the sort we see in those combinations of Socialism which often demand more patient self-sacrifice of the unit than they can repay by any tangible benefit. But in Europe, at least in the Germanic and progressive part, the whole temper of the people is against State control in private affairs, and the same irksomeness which will eventually expel Militarism, would make short work of its would-be successor. Founded amid the wild forests which the *Germania* of Tacitus describes to us, and gradually spreading over the homes of now decadent Classical civilisation, the Germanic individualism is loyal to Sovereign and State, because of

[1] If the undeviating Law of Natural Selection, or the equally compelling edicts of Social Legislation, could bring the much-needed reforms, the individual need not exert himself, as success would be certain, and his efforts superfluous.

the principle of *noblesse oblige:* just because it is not a compulsory but a willing homage. If the practice of war is demanding the greater freedom and spontaneity of the single soldier, in the political and ethical world there seems to be a similar recognition of the need of an initial (not a subsequent) independence of system and formula. The uniting bond between the (often) lawless caprice or egoism of the *one*, and the general order and welfare of the *whole*, must be a respect and an affection for persons, and not a cold and distant homage to abstract principles.[1]

§ 17. To return, in conclusion, to our original contrast of Oriental and Occidental modes of thought. Immersed in unconscious resignation to a spiritual, physical, or political unity, the Eastern rouses himself to reflection only to sink back into apathy, from a sense of impotence. The vague Pessimism which more or less strongly tinged their systems in very remote times, spread into Hellenic culture, and is revived to-day in reaction against hasty Optimism,—is the result of their power to criticise but not to alter. The illusion of freedom is all that separates us from the unreflecting happiness of animal life; and the Sage cannot be consoled by the thought that his soul is part of the universal Divine essence. All mysticism, East or West, tends to diminish on close survey the part which is truly Divine; passions, anger, practical impulses, virtues, discursive understanding, and at last reason itself and thought (*ψιλὴ νόησις*) are successively sacrificed as unworthy of this lofty origin; and the single link is the mysterious point "Synderesis," just the background of

[1] It must be confessed that while philosophy in England has spoken forcibly in favour of this ultimate axiom, spontaneity, and has regarded with disapproval the extension of State control, German thinkers have, on the other hand, been too much enamoured of the whole to care for the parts. But the unification of Germany and the influence of Hegel, "last of the Schoolmen," will account just now for the prevalence of this Realism, which certainly will not last, in prejudice to the character and temperament of the nation.

Germany (once the home of individuality, but owing to its long divorce from practical life, for a long period a nation of dreamers) speaks with mystical pride of such subordination of unit to whole, of detached fragment to whole mass, but it is akin to the whole temper and common sense of English philosophy, which here at least, in the department of positive Ethics, is entitled to credit both of originality and (compared to continental velleities) of a certain measure of achievement.

our thought, the unfathomable depth of our consciousness, which, even if it be the apex and throne of our being, can be reached only by ceasing to *think* as well as ceasing to *act*. Spinozism (and indeed all Monism) is the supreme achievement and the necessary goal of pure Reason, intent on the mysteries of life and compelled, by virtue of its own nature, to refuse all repose until it can rest or dissolve in a final and absolute vacuity. Mysticism, in the same way, whether pessimistic or devotional or merely physical, is the unfailing last term of such a survey, though it claims to be purely intellectual. From the Western point of view (which, I repeat, is only a prepossession of our mind, and cannot be explained or defended with complete success), "le Mysticisme c'est l'ennemi." Ethics, regarded in the widest sense as the Science of the conduct of life in Society, cannot look with equanimity at the removal of all possible motive or stimulant to action. As it confronted with defiance the arbitrary decrees of Calvinism or the selfishness of a dissolute Court, so it finds its duty to-day in combating, in the interests of Practice, the tendencies of modern scientific, political, humanitarian, religious Unification. The result is the same in all such systems, whether the unity, of which we are transient and unimportant manifestations, be a natural Substance or a physical Law, or a Communistic State, or the Life of the Race, or in Idealism, a single Spirit behind the seeming variety of individual experience and thought. In the two extreme views we are either the result of the Law of substance, or the "organ of a reason" which is not our own. In neither case are we what we thought we were. But upon the prejudices and postulates of our genuinely different soul-life has been built the structure of European ethics and society, and we shall be obliged in the end to revert to that region of Faith, wherein lies the spring of benevolent activities, and desert the supposed discoveries of Pure Reason; for therein lies stagnation and lethargy not merely of action but in the end of thought itself.

VIII

PERSONALITY: HUMAN AND DIVINE

By H. RASHDALL

1. The Idealist position assumed.
2. What is meant by the term 'Personality' besides consciousness?
3. (*a*) A thinking, not merely a feeling, consciousness; (*b*) a certain permanence.
4. (*c*) The person distinguishes himself from the objects of his thought, (*d*) and from other selves: Individuality.
5. (*e*) The person has a will or is active.
6. It is difficult to deny any of these characteristics in their most rudimentary form to the lowest or at least to the higher animal intelligences (cf. the case of children). Personality is a matter of degree.
7. Morality might establish a sharper distinction, but it is impossible to pronounce absolutely where this begins.
8. Yet these requirements are not *fully* satisfied even by man: human personality is imperfect. If satisfied at all, they must be satisfied only by God.
9. Belief in God assumed on idealistic grounds. Not merely a Universal Thinker but a Will.
10. Objections to the idea of Personality in God. (*a*) 'No subject without an object'; but this does not necessarily imply that the objects from which the subject distinguishes himself are other than the changing states of himself, willed by himself.
11. (*b*) A 'higher unity' is demanded; but this is unintelligible if it is meant that the distinction between subject and object is to be effaced.
12. (*c*) Some deny that God is Will as well as Thought; but the idea of Causality includes final causality, and demands 'activity' in the universal Mind.
13. (*d*) The ascription of Personality to God does not (as may be objected) involve Pluralism or independent, unoriginated souls.
14. (*e*) It is contended that God must be thought of as including finite spirits. This idea arises from the assumption that the *principium individuationis* of a being that exists for himself is the same as that of a thing which exists only for other. Our inability to distinguish between two minds whose content is identical does not prove that they are one and not two.
15. Reality of the Self vindicated. God may know other selves without being such selves.
16. How the knowledge of other selves, as they are for themselves, is possible. Confusion between the content of thought which is a universal, and there

fore 'common' to many minds, and the actual thinking consciousness which thinks.

17. Is God finite or infinite?

18. The question of Time.

19. God is not the Absolute. The Absolute is a society which includes God and all other spirits.

§ 1. I PROPOSE in the present paper to inquire what is the real meaning of the term Personality, and then to ask in what sense that term may be applied firstly to individual human beings and then to God.

In discussing a subject which really forms the apex as it were of the whole metaphysical pyramid, it is necessary to assume a good deal. One cannot begin at the bottom of the pyramid, but must assume that our foundations are already laid, and even that we are much nearer the top than the bottom of our theoretical structure. I shall assume in short the position of an Idealist.[1] I shall assume that we have followed and accepted the line of argument which goes to prove that there is no such thing as matter apart from mind, that what we commonly call *things* are not self-subsistent realities, but are only real when taken in their connection with mind—that they exist for mind, not for themselves.

§ 2. If this position be accepted, it must carry with it, it would *prima facie* appear, the existence of the souls, spirits, or selves, which know or experience the things. I must not stay to meet the argument by which writers like Mr. Bradley attack the ascription of absolute reality to individual souls. Anything that I can say on that subject may be most fitly reserved for a later stage of the argument. I put aside for the present the question whether personality carries with it the idea of reality. Even by those who decline to consider persons as absolutely real, it is not denied that persons do in a sense exist. What is meant, then, by saying that persons exist? What is the differentia of a person? First and most obviously personality implies consciousness. The main question indeed that may be raised about Personality is

[1] I have attempted a very brief and popular outline of the idealistic creed, as I understand it, in its theological bearings in a recently published volume of essays entitled *Contentio Veritatis*, by Six Oxford Tutors.

"What more besides consciousness is implied in it?" Worms are commonly supposed to be conscious, but they are not ordinarily called persons. How does the mind of a man differ from that of a worm?

§ 3. (*a*) I suppose it will be universally admitted that a person is a thinking consciousness, not a merely feeling consciousness. Personality implies thought, not mere sensibility.

(*b*) And this carries with it the further implication of a certain permanence. If such a thing as a purely feeling consciousness exists, its life must be supposed to consist in a succession of experiences, each of which only occupies consciousness when it is present, and is quite unconnected, for that being, with the consciousness of any other moment. The feeling of one moment might indeed produce effects which will alter or modify the feeling of another moment, but the consciousness of that second moment is not aware of this connection with preceding moments. A personal consciousness puts together and presents to itself and brings into relation with one another experiences of diverse moments. A certain degree of permanence is the second idea that we associate with personality.

§ 4. (*c*) And this permanence of the consciousness amid changing experiences further carries with it another characteristic. The person distinguishes himself from the objects of his thought, although the ultimate *esse* of these objects must, if we are really faithful to idealism, be experiences actual or possible of that same consciousness or of some other consciousness.

(*d*) Among these objects of thought which a person knows are, however, not merely *things* which exist for consciousness only, that is, exist for other (as the phrase is) but also other selves which are not known *merely* as objects for this person's thought, but as beings which exist for themselves. Many difficult and interesting questions may be raised about our knowledge of other minds, but these cannot be dealt with now. It is enough to say that the consciousness which is personal distinguishes itself from other consciousnesses and particularly from

other persons. Individuality is an essential element in our idea of personality.

§ 5. (*e*) So far there will be perhaps little dispute. I am possibly asserting something less universally admitted when I say that the most essential of all attributes of personality has yet to be mentioned. The person is not merely a feeling but a willing or originating consciousness. The self is conscious of being an ἀρχή[1]—whether in the sense of the Libertarian or in the sense of the Determinist who believes in "self-determination," need not be discussed here. Of course, willing implies and is essentially connected with both thought and feeling, but it is not the same thing. There cannot be will without thought or feeling; equally little can we form any distinct idea of what thought would be without will. For us at least there is no thought without attention: and attention is an act of the will. As Mr. Bosanquet puts it, "Whenever we are awake we are thinking, whenever we are awake we are willing." And the willing and the thinking are most intimately connected. Thought is an act, and we do not perform that act any more than any other act without a motive, and that implies feeling.

Our idea of a person is then the idea of a consciousness which thinks, which has a certain permanence, which distinguishes itself from its own successive experiences and from all other consciousness — lastly, and most important of all, which acts. A person is a conscious, permanent, self-distinguishing, individual, active being.

§ 6. What consciousnesses then possess personality? It is generally admitted that human beings possess personality, if any. But what minds do not possess personality? Most people would incontinently deny it to a worm, though they are fairly satisfied that worms have some kind of consciousness. And yet I confess I cannot attach much meaning to the idea of a consciousness which feels but does not know at all—even for a second—what it

[1] For the defence of this proposition from the psychological point of view I may content myself with referring to Dr. Stout's "Analytical Psychology," *passim*.

feels; if it does know, however dimly, if its feeling has any content, here, it would seem, there must be rudimentary thought. Worms admittedly wriggle: if they have the slightest awareness of this wriggling, there would seem to be a rudimentary idea of space, though no doubt they are quite incapable of grasping the truth that space excludes enclosure by two straight lines. Again, feeling must occupy a certain time or it would not be feeling at all. An atomic "now" could not even be felt. Mere feeling by itself, therefore, would seem to imply a certain continuity of consciousness, a sense of transition from one feeling to another, a rudimentary permanence.[1]

And still more confidently may we assert that not even from the lowest forms of animal consciousness can we exclude the idea of impulse, activity, conation, as the psychologists call it. In his brilliant Gifford Lectures we even find Professor Ward sanctioning to some extent the attempt to make activity a more fundamental and earlier-developed characteristic of animal life than thought, and (to me more questionably) to attribute teleological activity, and with it apparently consciousness, to plant-life. Whatever may be thought of these speculations, animals at all events have impulses, and it is impossible to draw any sharp line between the type of impulse which we call instinct, in which we assume that there is no consciousness of the end aimed at, and the reflective resolution of the full-grown man who presents to himself a desired object and deliberately adopts it as his end. Without some consciousness—I will not say of an end but at least of the act towards which there is an impulse—even instinct would not be instinct, and between the blindest of instincts and the most deliberate of volitions there are probably impulses of every degree of reflectiveness.

But whatever difficulties may be felt with regard to the worm or the jelly-fish, when we come to the higher animals

[1] "Every feeling of pleasure or of dislike, every kind of self-enjoyment, does in our view contain the primary basis of personality, that immediate self-existence which all later developments of self-consciousness may indeed make plainer to thought by contrasts and comparisons, thus also intensifying its value, but which is not in the first place produced by them."—Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk. ix. chap. iv., E.T. ii. 679.

at all events, it is clear to me that it is wholly arbitrary to deny to the higher animals in some rudimentary form each and every one of the characteristics which we have held to constitute Personality. And yet where shall we say that Personality begins? It is impossible—in all probability with the amplest knowledge it would still be impossible—to say where personality begins in the evolution of animal life, just as it is impossible to say where it begins in the life-history of the individual man. The newly born infant is no more of a person than a worm, except *δυνάμει*. Yet it is impossible at any period in the life of the child to say to it "To-day thou art a person; yesterday thou wast not." Personality in short is a matter of degree.

§ 7. We may no doubt find a more definite test of personality, if we add to our other *differentiæ* one which undoubtedly has a good right to be included in it, the capacity for Morality. Here we should have little difficulty in saying definitely that there are some types of consciousness which are below personality altogether. We may, indeed, see germs of Morality in the sociality of animals; but we do not commonly consider Morality to begin till we reach the stage in which there is definite choice between conflicting impulses. In the lower animals it is commonly assumed that every impulse necessarily determines action while it is there, or until its place is taken by another, which then becomes similarly irresistible. But still it would be difficult to say that in the highest stages of animal life this dispossession of one impulse by another is effected entirely without comparison between the ideal satisfaction of the two impulses; and it is difficult to say at what point in the evolution either of the individual or of the race the choice between the conflicting impulses—between, for instance, a race-preserving action and a self-preserving one—becomes sufficiently deliberate to constitute Morality. If we place the beginning of Morality high, we must admit that there is something very like Morality below that limit. If we place it low, we shall have to admit that the germinal Morality of the

savage is very unlike the developed Morality of the civilised adult. And even in civilised adults the capacity for Morality varies so enormously that it is quite an arguable position to maintain that in some men it is non-existent or wholly undeveloped.

§ 8. There is no reason to believe that what we have laid down as the essential characteristics of personality are fully satisfied by any form of consciousness below the human, though to no consciousness can one deny some approximation to most of them. But are they fully satisfied even by the human Self? Certainly Socrates was more of a person than a savage. But does even Socrates fully satisfy the demands of personality? Apply the test which discriminates the thinking consciousness from the merely sensitive consciousness. It is of the essence of the thinking consciousness that it should bind together the successive moments of experience, that it should look before and after, that it should know the past and the future as well as the present. Did Socrates know his own past—his own even, to say nothing of others' past—as well as he knew his present? There is every reason to believe that Socrates had forgotten much of his early experience—some things probably (to avoid cavil) which he might have remembered with advantage. Large masses of his youthful experience had simply dropped out; they were as little recognised by him as belonging to the same self of which he was now conscious as though they had been the experiences of some other person. This falls short of the perfect ideal of personality. Take the test of moral choice. Socrates had a rational will, pursuing ends in which his Reason discerned value. But it would be too much to say that a passion for "scoring off" Sophists never mastered his judgment, and betrayed him into remarks which upon reflection even he himself would have recognised as not conducive to the discovery of truth or to the attainment of his own true good. Thus the most developed human consciousness seems to fall short of the ideal which every human consciousness suggests to us. An imperfect personality is the most that we can attribute

even to the most richly endowed of human souls. If a person *τῷ ἀκριβεστάτῳ λόγῳ* is to exist, such personality must be found not in man but in some superior being—as far as our knowledge goes, only, if at all, in God.

§ 9. But does any such consciousness as is commonly understood to be implied by the term God really exist? Here once more I must assume an argument which I have not leisure to develop. I must assume that my readers are familiar with the argument by which Idealists lead up to this idea of a Universal Self-consciousness. The world, as Idealism holds itself to have proved, must exist in a mind. Yet if Science is to be justified, it is clear that its only *esse* cannot be in such minds as our own. My own Reason, making inferences from my own experience, assures me that the world was when I was not—when no human or sub-human ancestor of mine was there to contemplate the molten planet or the contracting nebula. I cannot understand my present experience without making that assumption. There must then have been a consciousness for which the world always existed. The very fact that I know there are things which I do not know, and that what I know I know but imperfectly, proves the existence of a Universal Knower if to be (when applied to a thing) = to be experienced. Idealism then proves the existence of a Universal Thinker. And analogy would lead us to believe that we must attribute to the Universal Thinker in perfection all those characteristics which are implied by Personality, and which yet no human person ever completely satisfied. Just the same line of thought which infers that God knows perfectly the world which we know imperfectly points to the belief that He possesses perfectly the personality which we possess imperfectly—that He is a being who thinks, who persists throughout his successive experiences, who knows those past experiences as well as the present, who distinguishes Himself from the objects of his thought, who in particular distinguishes Himself from all other consciousnesses, and, finally, who wills, and wills in accordance with the conception of an ideal end or good. I need hardly discuss

elaborately what God wills: by any one who admits the idea of volition into his own conception of God at all it will hardly be questioned that, if God wills, He must will all, or at least (let us say for the present) everything that is not willed by some lesser will. We are conscious of objects which we know and will, and of others which we know but do not will. God must will the object of his own thought—*i.e.* the world.

§ 10. Why is the conception of Personality in God such a stumbling-block? Fully to state and meet these objections would be a Philosophy. I can only aim at suggesting the bare headings (as it were) of some chapters which such a Philosophy would contain.

(*a*) The first head of objection runs thus. To think of God simply as a spirit or soul or self, distinguishable from the world, is to forget that the human self knows itself only at the same time and by the same act wherein it knows the not-self. A self which knows nothing is a mere abstraction. God therefore must not be thought of as apart from the world. The world is as necessary to God as God is to the world. I should quite admit that the divine, like the human, Thinker must think objects: but then I should contend that these objects must not be understood as anything existing independently of the knowing Ego. The self must distinguish itself from something; but that something need only be the changing states of itself.[1] Further, I should insist that all these experiences or objects of the divine thought must be conceived of as willed, no less than thought, and therefore are not to be distinguished from God's own being in the way in which the involuntary and often painful experiences of ourselves have to be distinguished from the self which knows them. To think of the world (with some Idealists) as though it were an eternal complement to God—a sort of Siamese twin to which He is eternally and inseparably annexed but which is something other than the content of

[1] I am dealing here only with the world of things. Objections might no doubt be raised to the idea of a Universe in which one Self and his thoughts were the sole Reality.

his Will—is to forget our Idealism, and still more to forget our "Monism." The Dualism is no less Dualism because we are told that the subject is as necessary to the object as the object to the subject, if the object be thought of as something which exists quite independently of being willed by the Mind which is compelled to know it but which may yet (for anything that such a Philosophy has to say to the contrary) be constrained to pronounce it very bad. Such a view is none the less Dualism because the object is understood to be an "object of thought" and not the "matter" of the materialist. To say that the subject is necessary to the object does not get rid of the two principles: Ahriman was, I suppose, in the Zoroastrian Philosophy regarded as necessary to Ormuzd. Such a mode of thought really ends (as many of Green's disciples have shown) in a naturalism which for all practical purposes is indistinguishable from materialism. When God ceases to be thought of as active power, He soon comes to be regarded as merely an abstraction: if He is still spoken of as "thought," that is merely an abstract way of representing all the true thought of all the individual thinkers in the Universe *as if* they were all held together in a system by an actual consciousness. However abhorrent this tendency would have been to the essentially religious mind of such a man as Green, that is the natural development of a Philosophy which really banishes the idea of activity not merely from its idea of God but in truth from its conception of the Universe as a whole.

§ 11. (*b*) But some will insist, not merely that God must have a world to know, but that neither God nor the world, nor the two taken together, can be regarded as the Absolute being. God + His thoughts, Subject + object does not satisfy our demand for Unity. The Absolute must be both subject and object. It must *be* that which it knows. It must "transcend" the distinction between subject and object. It must be both at once or a third thing that is neither. To this I answer: "If all that is meant is that what God knows (putting aside for the

present other spirits and their experiences) must be in a sense part of Himself, within His own being, I admit that that is so (if what He thinks is also what He wills) but I should contend that such an admission does not get rid of the distinction between subject and object, nor is it inconsistent with personality. If what is meant is that there is a kind of third being unlike the only two kinds of being which we have any reason to believe in—neither thinker nor thought, neither subject nor object, neither that which exists for self nor that which exists for other, I answer that the supposition is wholly gratuitous: and that it is, indeed, one to which no real meaning can be attached. It is open to all the objections which have been so copiously hurled at the Kantian 'Noumena,' at the Spencerian 'Unknowable,' at the crude 'matter' of the 'naïve Realist.' We don't really solve difficulties by chucking contradictions[1] into the Absolute and saying 'Be ye reconciled there, for we are quite sure ye cannot be reconciled here.' Mr. Bradley's Philosophy of the Absolute, however brilliant his genius, however invaluable the stimulus which he has given to metaphysical thought in the attempt to construct it, is (I venture to suggest) an attempt to fuse two wholly contradictory and irreconcilable lines of thought—the idealistic and the Spinozistic. The idea that thought (or thinker) can be an attribute or adjective of something which is neither thought nor thinker, is wholly inadmissible to one who sees, as clearly as does Mr. Bradley, that nothing exists but experience.

§ 12. (*c*) It is objected that we have no right to attribute the idea of will to God. Of course there is much in our experience of volition which belongs to our limitations—sometimes even to our animal organisms. There is sometimes a disposition to find the essence of will in the sense of effort—a mere matter of muscular sensation. But that is not of the essence of will. Our volition (as we know it) is the only experience which enables us to give concrete embodiment to the purely *a priori* conception of Causality, which includes both final cause and efficient cause. We

[1] Not that in this case there is any real contradiction.

know why a thing happened when we know (1) that it realised an end which Reason pronounces to have value, and (2) what was the force or (knowing all the abuses to which that word is liable), I will say, the real being which turned that end from a mere idea into an actuality, *i.e.* the actual experience of some soul. Doubtless my definition involves a circle: for Causality or activity is an ultimate category which cannot be defined. If Idealism be true, this force or active reality must be some kind of conscious being: such an active consciousness as we are aware of in ourselves will supply us with at least something more than a merely symbolical expression for the union of force or power or activity with a consciously apprehended end. Even apart from this argument from Causality, the mere fact that mind, as we know it, is always will as well as thought, would be a sufficient ground for inferring by analogy that, if God be the supreme source of being or Mind, He too must be Will no less than Thought.

§ 13. (*d*) The idealistic argument, as here stated or rather presupposed, leads us up to a view of the Universe which finds all reality in souls and their experiences. It remains to ask what is the relation between these souls or spirits. To account for the world as a mere object of knowledge, we have found it necessary to regard one of these spirits, God, as omniscient and eternal, and therefore as *sui generis*, incomparably superior to human intelligences with their partial and limited knowledge and still more limited capacities of action. We have found it necessary, moreover, to regard Him as causative—as causing those experiences of the other souls of which their own wills are not the cause, and (since no human will is ever the *whole* cause of anything) as co-operating in some sense with whatever causality is exercised by human wills. What, then, are we to say as to the relation between the supreme volitional Intelligence and other volitional intelligences? Many will be disposed to think that the course of my argument points in the direction of Pluralism—to the hypothesis of many independent, underived intelligences,

coeternal and uncreated. I have no *a priori* objection or prejudice whatever against such a view if there were sufficient grounds for postulating it. But I do not think that our argument necessitates any such consequence. In the first place Pluralism fails to account for the unity of the world, not merely for the experienced uniformity of nature (which is a postulate of Science but no necessity of thought) but for the mere fact of the likeness between different minds, the fact that we all think in the same categories, etc. This might, indeed, be regarded as an ultimate fact which cannot be accounted for, but it tends to make the unity of the world not only hard to account for but hard to understand. In the second place, our souls in all their experiences are dependent upon modifications of a bodily organism which from our point of view must be regarded as due to the thought and will of God: the dependence upon God of the bodily organism carries with it the dependence upon Him also of the spirits to which such bodies are organic. To suppose the souls independent of God would involve (as it seems to me) either the monstrous idea of a purely casual coincidence between the retreating brow and the limited intelligence or a no less appalling and arbitrary scheme of pre-established harmony. And thirdly, the whole contrast between the known limits of human knowledge and the inferred Omniscience of God prepares us by analogy for a corresponding contrast between an eternal or unoriginated mind and minds which are originated and dependent. The mind whose knowledge is partial and progressive may well have a beginning. Experience gives us no evidence for pre-existence, and we are not justified in going beyond experience except in so far as is necessary to explain experience. Moreover, pre-existence is a hypothesis which presupposes the waters of Lethe or some similar Mythology.[1] I infer, then, that the human mind, like all minds, is derived from the one supreme Mind. As attempts to express this relation, I

[1] I do not mean that such a conception is impossible or absurd, but that it is gratuitous.

have no objection to the fashionable phrases "partial communication to us of the divine thought," "partial reproduction of the divine consciousness," "limited modes of the universal self-consciousness," "emanations from the divine Mind," and so on, provided they are not used to evade the admission that the fact of such reproductions occurring must be regarded as no less due to the divine will than the first appearance and the gradual development of the bodily organism by which those reproductions are conditioned. But I do not know that such expressions are any improvement upon the old biblical phrase that man was created by God in his own image and after his own likeness.

§ 14. (*e*) Leaving the question of origin, how are we to conceive the relation between God and man when the latter is once in being? Having repudiated the pluralistic tendency to make other souls independent of God, I must go on to justify Pluralism as against Monism in its view of the separateness and distinctness of the individual self-consciousness from God when once in existence and so long as it exists. The argument by which Monism makes the human soul (in some one of innumerable different meanings or shades of meaning) a part or an element of, or aspect of, and therefore in some sense as identical with the Divine, seems to me to be grounded upon one supreme fallacy. I detect that fallacy in almost every line of almost every Hegelian thinker (if I may say so with all respect) whom I have read,[1] and of many who object to that designation. That fallacy is the assumption that what constitutes existence for others is the same as what constitutes existence for self.[2] A *thing* is as

[1] Of course this does not apply to the individualistic Hegelianism of Mr. McTaggart which he has shown strong reason for believing was the Hegelianism of Hegel.

[2] This charge could, I believe, be illustrated over and over again out of Professor Royce's *The World and the Individual*, the ablest attempt yet made to think out the theory of a common Consciousness including individual selves. The confusion is fostered by the author's tendency to speak of the self as a "meaning." "I, the individual, am what I am by virtue of the fact that my intention, my meaning, my wish, my desire, my hope, my life, stand in contrast to those of any other individual" (*loc. cit.* p. 426). Here it is not clear whether 'the meaning' implies the meaning as forming the content of knowledge or the

it is known: its *esse* is to be known: what it is for the experience of spirits, is its whole reality: it is that and nothing more. But the *esse* of a person is to know himself, to be for himself, to feel and to think for himself, to act on his own knowledge, and to know that he acts. In dealing with persons, therefore, there is an unfathomable gulf between knowledge and reality. What a person is for himself is entirely unaffected by what he is for any other, so long as he does not know what he is for that other. No knowledge of that person by another, however intimate, can ever efface the distinction between the mind as it is for itself, and the mind as it is for another. The essence of a person is not what he is for another, but what he is for himself. It is there that his *principium individuationis* is to be found—in what he is, when looked at from the inside. All the fallacies of our anti-individualist thinkers come from talking as though the essence of a person lay in what can be known about him, and not in his own knowledge, his own experience of himself. And that, in turn, arises largely from the assumption that knowledge, without feeling or will, is the whole of Reality. Of course, I do not mean to deny that a man is made what he is (in part) by his relations to other persons, but no knowledge of these relations by any other than himself is a knowledge which can constitute what he is to himself. However much I know of another man, and however much by the likeness of my own experience, by the acuteness of the interpretation which I put upon his acts and words, by the sympathy which I feel for him—I may know of another's inner life, that life is for meaning as forming part of the individual's consciousness. If the former, there is nothing intrinsically absurd in the supposition that two individuals should have exactly *the same* meaning, and yet remain two. Or if they do not, there is no difference between them, and the (even apparent) individuality of the individual self disappears. In the latter case there will be as many meanings as there are selves, no matter how much alike they may be. Professor Royce seems habitually to ignore exactly the differentia of Consciousness. He constantly assumes that to be in relation with another being is to be identical with that being (just as a *thing* undoubtedly is constituted by its relations), that the individuality of the self differs in nothing from the individuality of a star (*l.c.* p. 432), that the individuality of the self lies in what it is for God. ("The self is in itself real. It possesses individuality. And it possesses this individuality, as we have seen, in God and for God," *l.c.* p. 433.)

ever a thing quite distinct from me the knower of it.[1] My toothache is for ever my toothache only,[2] and can never become yours; and so is my love for another person, however passionately I may desire—to use that metaphor of poets and rhetoricians which imposes upon mystics, and even upon philosophers—to become one with the object of my love: for that love would cease to be if the aspiration were literally fulfilled. If *per impossibile* two disembodied spirits, or selves, were to go through exactly the same experiences—knew, felt, and willed always alike—still they would be two, and not one.[3] The fact that *we* should not be able to say anything about the difference could not alter the fact; for with persons (once again) what they are for the knowledge of others does not constitute the whole of their reality. But each of them would know the difference between his own experience and his knowledge of the other's experience; and each of us, being a separate self, would know that each of these two must know it, but we could not know what it is except in so far as each of us might know that

[1] I cannot here further analyse how we obtain this knowledge.

[2] Mr. Bradley contends that the Absolute may feel all our pains and yet not feel them *as pain* (like the discord in Music which only increases the harmony), but then *I* do feel it as pain. Could any defence give away the case more hopelessly, or show more convincingly that I feel something which is not the Absolute's feeling?

[3] If this is not self-evident, let me add the following argument. It is admitted that two such spirits might have like but not identical experiences (*i.e.* experience in which there was some identity but some difference) without ceasing to be two. Let us suppose the content of the consciousness of each to become gradually more and more like that of the other, including all the time the knowledge of the other's existence. Can it be seriously contended that as the last remaining difference disappeared, that consciousness in A of not being B would suddenly disappear too? Of course it may be said that the consciousness of not being B is part of the content of A's consciousness. If so, of course the case supposed could not possibly arise, and the difficulty disappears. But still the difference between A and B would be absolutely unrecognisable and indescribable for any other consciousness, although such a consciousness might know that there were two beings with such contents of consciousness identical but for the knowledge by each that he was not the other. Or again let me take the case of two consciousnesses not knowing of each other's existence, but having (as a third mind is aware) nearly identical experiences. Let us suppose two very elementary minds, whose experience should be confined as nearly as is possible to present sensation. Let us suppose the pain they suffer to become more and more alike. Will it be gravely said that if for a moment the throbs which filled each consciousness became the same (*i.e.* same in content, as known but not felt by the third mind), that mind would have to pronounce that there were two throbs no longer, but only one?

it is like, or analogous to, the difference between what he is for himself, and what he knows of the self that seems to be likest him.

§ 15. Mr. Bradley's objections to ascribing reality to the Self really, I venture to think, spring in great part from the same root. That the self includes the not-self as known to me is true enough. So long as the "not-self" is a mere thing, it has no reality apart from what it is to me and other selves. What it is for me, is in a sense part of me. When the not-self is a person, the knowledge of that self is part of my experience, and so (if you like it) in a sense part of me; but that does not show that there is not a something which he is for himself, which is no part at all of me, and which is as real as I am. In so far as I know what he is in his own self-knowledge, of course there is an identity between what he is for me (part of my ego) and what he is for himself (part of his ego), but this identity is a mere abstraction, the identity of a Universal. Mr. Bradley cannot usually be accused of mistaking such abstractions for reality. Of course if "real" is to mean "out of all relation to anything outside itself," then it is obvious on the face of it—without 500 pages of argument—that nothing can be real except the whole. But that is not the usual sense of "real," and if the words be used in other than their usual sense, Mr. Bradley's paradoxes sink into something not so very far removed from platitudes. Undoubtedly the self is not what it is apart from its relations to other selves; but, unless those relations to other selves as they are for other are the whole of its being, the self may be real without being the whole of Reality. It is only in the case of a thing that its relations to some other mind as known to that other constitute the whole of its reality. If "reality" be taken to mean self-sufficing reality, a being underived from and independent of all other beings, we may admit that such reality cannot be ascribed to the finite self, and can only be ascribed to the whole—to the whole kingdom of selves taken in their relation to one another and to God, who is one of the selves and the source of them. We do not

get to any fuller or deeper Reality by supposing an existence in which God or the Absolute no longer distinguishes himself from the selves, or the selves from God. Without any such unintelligible confusion there will remain a very real sense in which the being of the originated souls may be regarded as derived from, and even if you like, therefore, in the sense of forming objects of the divine thought, included in the Divine Being. But if we use such language, we must make it plain that the knowledge of the finite self by God does not exhaust its being as is the case with the mere object. It is the knowledge of them that is in God. God must know the self as a self which has a consciousness, an experience, a will which is its own—that is, as a being which is not identical with the knowledge that He has of it.

In short, all the conclusions which are applicable to each particular self in his relation to another seem to be equally applicable to the relations between God and any other Spirit. Undoubtedly God may, must have an infinitely deeper and completer knowledge of every one of us than any one of us has of another—nay, a profounder knowledge of each of us than each of us has of himself, for each of us forgets; each of us knows his past self only by means of abstractions—abstract generalities which (as Mr. Bradley has taught us) are so far off from the realities—the half-remembered half-forgotten colour or sound, joy or sorrow which they symbolise; still less does he know all his yet unrealised capacities or potentialities. Each of us is but imperfectly personal. God alone (as Lotze maintained) fully realises the ideal of personality; and that higher personality—that complete knowledge of self—must carry with it much more knowledge of other selves than to us is possible. How God knows what I feel without having actually felt the like, I do not know: but there is nothing in the supposition so inherently self-contradictory as there is in the idea that God feels what I feel at this moment and yet that there is only one feeling at this moment and not two. The only analogy that seems available is the fact that I can know what I once

felt, though I feel it no longer. Doubtless God cannot be thought of as attaining his knowledge of other selves by the clumsy processes of inference or analogy by which we so imperfectly enter into the consciousness of others: doubtless pleasure, pain, colour, sound, volition must be in God something different from what they are to us. And yet even for God such a knowledge of other selves must be in some way dependent upon a likeness (*i.e.* partial identity of content) between his experience and ours. God must be thought of as feeling pleasure—yes, and (as far as I see) pain also, or something like pain, as loving persons and hating evil, as willing the good and so on. Say, if you will, that such terms applied to God are mere symbols. But then so (I should contend), in a sense, is "thought." God's thought can as little be exactly what our thought is as our joys and sorrows can be exactly what his are. Yet imperfect knowledge is still knowledge, or we should have to confess that we know nothing at all. And it is arbitrary out of the three distinguishable but inseparable and mutually dependent aspects or activities of self-conscious being as known to us—will, thought, feeling—to select one, namely thought (which by itself is a mere abstraction), and to call that God. I need not further insist on the arbitrariness of this procedure: the imperishable value of Mr. Bradley's "Appearance and Reality" lies largely in its exposure of it. God, if He is to be known at all, must be known as a Trinity—Potentia, Sapientia, Bonitas or Voluntas, as the Schoolmen (in this matter so much more rational and intelligible than later theologians) consistently maintained.[1] God must then, it would seem, know other selves by the analogy of what He is Himself; He could not (it is reasonable to infer) have created beings *wholly* unlike Himself. His knowledge of other selves may be perfect knowledge without his ever being or becoming the selves which He knows. His being must, if this is

[1] I only suggest an analogy between the traditional doctrine in its scholastic and philosophical form and that which I suggest. To make them identical, we must take Potentia to = Will, and include the element of feeling in Bonitas.

all that you mean by the phrase, "penetrate" their inmost being. But to talk of one self-conscious being including or containing in himself or being identical with other selves is to use language which is (as it appears to me) wholly meaningless and self-contradictory, for the essence of being a self is to distinguish oneself from other selves. Such theories are just one instance of that all-fertile source of philosophical error—the misapplication of spacial metaphors. Minds are not Chinese boxes which can be put 'inside' one another. And if it be answered that the higher Unity that is to transcend the difference between God and other selves, between selves and things, must therefore not be a self, I answer that we know of no form of ultimately real being except the self. To talk of other "beings" which are not selves is as unmeaning as to talk about beings which do not exist. That being which is not *for* a self *is* a self; and it is only in a restricted and popular and not in a strictly philosophical sense that 'being' can be attributed to that which merely is for other. The real is that which is for itself, and every spirit or consciousness (in its measure and degree) is for itself.

§ 16. Is the question raised "How can one Self know another self not merely as it is for other but as it is for itself?" It might be enough to plead that the difficulty is not made one whit less difficult by the theory of a universal Consciousness which includes all particular selves. Even if this theory helped to explain how the Universal self knows the particular self and the particular self the Universal self, it would not explain how one particular self knows another particular self. You may say that each particular self really *is* each other particular self, and is therefore inside it and not outside it. But then how does one self *appear* to be outside the other? Where is the distinction between them? And why does not one self not know *all* about each and every other self as it is for itself? I cannot really profess much sympathy with the supposed difficulty about explaining how we know other Selves. It seems to me an ultimate part of our experience that from our self-knowledge we do by

inference infer the existence of other selves which are for themselves as well as for us; and Philosophy has nothing to do but to record and systematise the way we actually think. In my thought the idea of a being which is for itself as well as for me is quite clearly distinguishable from that of a being which is only for me. The fact that I think it, is the only possible argument to show that it can be thought. Of course it is possible to deny the validity of the inferences by which I reach this result. I do not propose to discuss this question further, but will only say that Solipsism can be made just as plausible from one philosophical point of view as from another: like Scepticism it admits of no decisive refutation, but carries no conviction. The only philosophies that can justly be taunted with a tendency towards Solipsism are the systems which fail to distinguish between knowledge and other aspects of being, especially feeling; and under this category may be placed not only the Sensationalism which merges knowledge in feeling, but also the Intellectualism which merges feeling in knowledge. If I cannot distinguish between my feeling and my knowledge that I feel, naturally I cannot know that another feels; and when we have abstracted from my total consciousness the feeling-element, the knowledge-element taken by itself can be very plausibly identified with the mere abstract content of knowledge, which is no doubt precisely the same for any number of Selves who think the same thing, and therefore the same for God and for the other minds whom God knows but is not. It may be plausibly identified with it, but it is not really the same thing. For there will still remain the difference between the content of my knowledge and the actual knowing consciousness. The knowledge taken apart from the feeling and the willing is no doubt an abstraction; it is only an aspect of the single Ego that feels, wills, and knows. The confusion has arisen largely from the ambiguity of the word "thought." Thought may mean "the content that is thought," or it may mean "the consciousness which thinks." The content of two people's

thought may be the same: but the consciousness that thinks in the two cases is different. Every experience as such is unique: the content abstracted from the experience itself is always a universal, and may therefore be common to any number of such experiences as well as to minds which share the knowledge without having had similar experiences.[1] And it is not only the content of another's experience that I can know, but the fact that there is a real self which has that experience. Even in the case of selves with precisely similar experiences, I can know that there were one, two, or more of such beings. But it is not my knowledge of each self that makes it a self; neither does my inability to recognise any but a numerical difference between them telescope them into one. The difficulty has been largely manufactured by the habit of philosophers of speaking of all that I know as a "non-ego" without taking any account of the difference between the "non-ego" which is an "ego" and the "non-ego" which is only what I or other minds know about it.

§ 17. Do you say that all this makes God finite? Be it so, if you will. Everything that is real is in that sense finite. God is certainly limited by all other beings in the Universe, that is to say, by other selves, in so far as He is not those selves. He is not limited, as I hold, by anything which does not ultimately proceed from his own Nature or Will or Power. That power is doubtless limited, and in the frank recognition of this limitation of

[1] Often of course, as Mr. Bradley has shown so impressively, this generalised content reproduces or represents but very imperfectly the actual experience—even in the case of the thinker's own past experiences. That is particularly of course with pleasures and pains, the memory of which is not necessarily pleasant or painful at all. Yet it is an exaggeration to say that we cannot know in any degree what a past pleasure or pain was like, and equally so that we know *nothing* of what other people's pleasures and pains are to them. Pleasure and pain themselves belong to the uniqueness of consciousness: their generalised content may be known to many minds, and the fact that no pleasure necessarily enters into the idea of a pleasure, and that (still more certainly) no pain into the idea of a pain is an impressive exhibition of the difference between knowledge and reality. The champions of an inclusive consciousness have never found a difficulty in the uniqueness of two exactly similar experiences of the same person (experiences of which the content is the same) because of the difference in the time-relations of the two: but there is nothing in the nature of time to exclude the simultaneous existence of two or more unique experiences.

power lies the only solution of the problem of Evil which does not either destroy the goodness of God or destroy moral distinctions altogether. He is limited by his own eternal, if you like "necessary" nature—a nature which wills eternally the best which that nature has in it to create. The limitation is therefore what Theologians have often called a self-limitation: provided only that this limitation must not be regarded as an arbitrary self-limitation, but as arising from the presence of that idea of the best that is eternally present to a will whose potentialities are limited—that idea of the best which to Platonising Fathers and Schoolmen became the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The truth of the world is then neither Monism, in the pantheising sense of the word, nor Pluralism: the world is neither a single Being, nor many co-ordinate and independent Beings, but a One Mind who gives rise to many. We may of course, if we choose, describe the whole collection of these beings as One Reality, with enough capital letters to express the unction which that numeral appears to carry with it for some minds; but after all the Reality, whether eternally or only at one particular stage of its development, is a community of Persons.

§ 18. The embarrassment of my language at this point will make it plain that I am getting myself entangled in another question more difficult, and more momentous even in its ultimate implications, than the question of Personality—that is, the question of Time. Is Time objective or subjective? Is the Absolute in time, or is time in the Absolute? A hasty or unconsidered treatment of such questions would be useless. I have endeavoured, while assuming that the individual self is in time, to avoid language which is *necessarily* inconsistent with the position that God is "out of time." I will only add here that a full investigation of this question might lead us to the conclusion, that, just as we have seen reason to insist that any sense in which the divine knowledge penetrates the individual consciousness must be a sense which leaves to the individual his full

individuality, personality, reality, so any sense in which we might find it necessary to admit that the divine knowledge transcends the distinctions of past, present, and future, any sense in which God is (to use the medieval expression) *supra tempus* must be a sense which is compatible with leaving to the time-consciousness in which individuals undoubtedly live, true reality likewise, though there may and must undoubtedly be aspects of this reality which we do not fully understand.

§ 19. The indisposition to admit that souls have an existence which is not merged in that of God, seems to arise largely from the fact that philosophers have imposed upon themselves and others by the trick of simply assuming (without proof) an identity between God and the philosophical "Absolute," and then arguing that if any of the attributes ascribed by theology or religion or common-sense to God are inconsistent with what is implied in the conception of "the Absolute," no such being as the God of Religion can exist. Personality is undoubtedly inconsistent with the idea of the Absolute or Infinite Being, and therefore it is assumed that God is not personal. The arguments of Idealism really, as it seems to me, go to prove that over and above our souls there does exist such a Being as Theologians, except when they have unintelligently aped the language of philosophies not their own, have commonly understood by God. The Absolute, therefore, if we must have a phrase which might well be dispensed with, consists of God and the souls, including, of course, all that God and those souls know or experience. The Absolute is not a simple aggregate formed of these spirits, as each of them is if taken apart from the rest, but a society in which each must be taken with all its relations to the rest—as being what it is for itself together with what it is for other. This leaves quite open the question what is the nature of those relations. It will be quite as true that 'the Absolute is a society' in our view as it is in the view of the Pluralists who make souls coeternal with God, or as in the view of Mr. McTaggart, who makes Reality consist

of eternal souls without God.[1] Only in our view God at a certain point of time caused the souls to exist; or (if we please) by an eternal act causes that at a certain time they shall appear in the time-series. The Absolute, we may say, becomes a Society; or, if we like to think of everything that is to be as having an existence already in some sense in the Absolute, we may say that the Absolute eternally is a God who persists throughout time (or, if it be so, a God who is *supra tempus*) together with selves who are eternally present to the mind of God, but who begin to have their real being, in accordance with His will, at particular moments of time.

[1] I have very much sympathy with Mr. McTaggart's criticism of the usual Hegelian idea of God as a consciousness including other consciousnesses. (See especially *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, pp. 60, 61.) I must not attempt to examine his position now, but will briefly indicate where it seems to me defective. Besides all the difficulties involved in the idea of pre-existent souls, it is open to this objection. Mr. McTaggart (whatever we may say of the "Pluralists") feels that the world must be a Unity, that it consists not merely of souls but of related and interconnected souls which form a system. But a system for whom? The idea of a system which is not "for" any mind at all is not open to an Idealist; and the idea of a world each part of which is known to some mind but is not known as a whole to any one mind is almost equally difficult. Where then, in his view, is the Mind that knows the whole, *i.e.* the whole system of souls with the content of each? The difficulty could only be met by making out that each soul is omniscient, and perhaps this is really Mr. McTaggart's meaning. If so, the difficulty of making each soul as an extra-temporal reality omniscient, while as occupying a position in the time-series it is all the time ignorant of much, is one which needs no pointing out. In short, I hold that the ordinary idealistical arguments for a Mind which knows and wills the whole are not invalidated by Mr. McTaggart's criticism; while I can only cordially accept his extraordinarily able and convincing criticism of the position that the supreme mind *is* the whole.

THE END

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